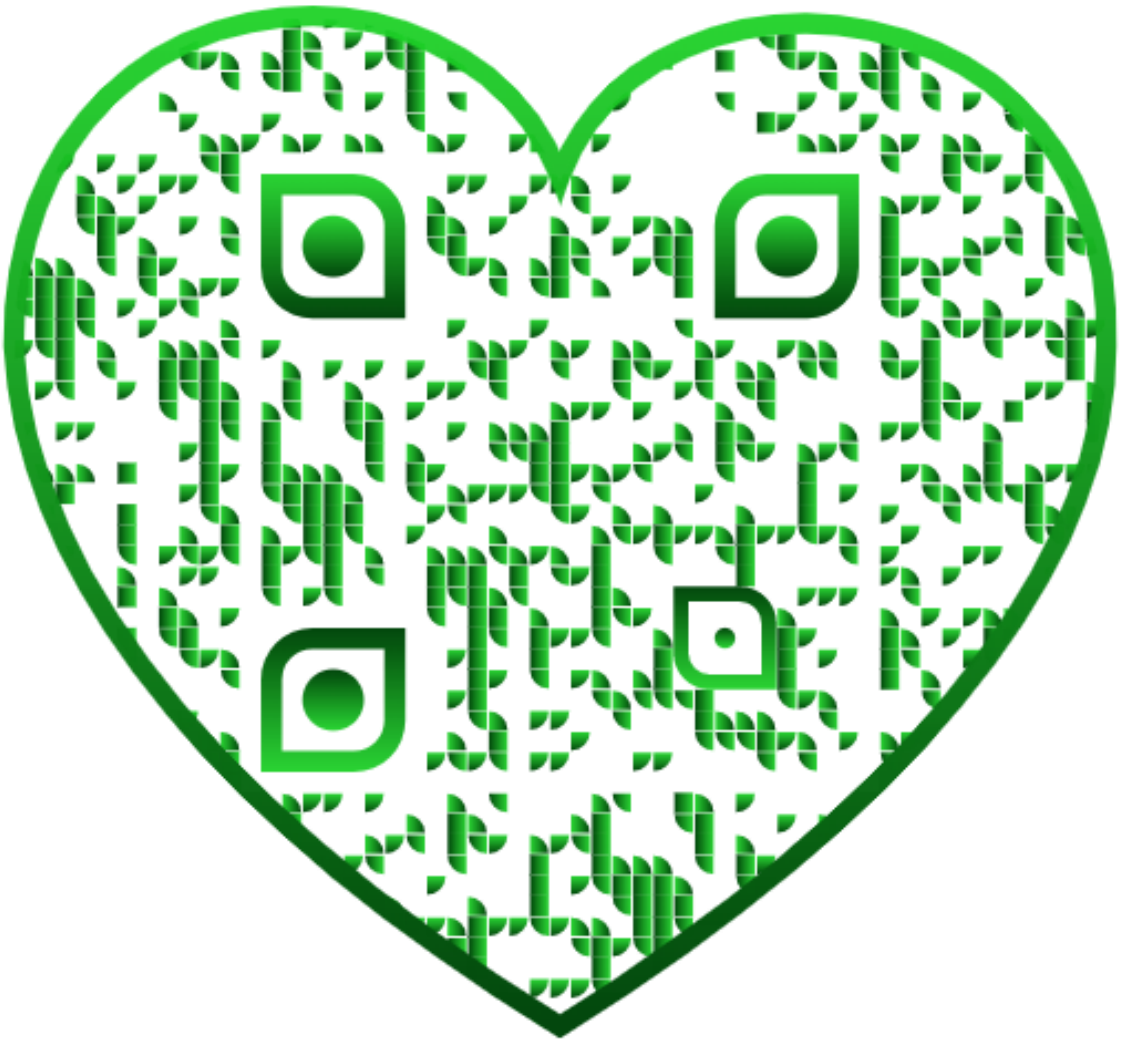
Oliver Tappe

(IN)VISIBLE

Out-of-Body Experiences and Explorations into the Afterlife

The Monroe Method



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Oliver Tappe's inaugural visit to the Monroe Institute in Virginia in 2000 proved transformative. It prompted him to reevaluate everything he previously understood about his own existence. Following this momentous visit, the former TV journalist and tour guide has continued to explore realms beyond the visible through countless Out-of-Body Experiences. In 2010, Oliver became a certified outreach trainer for the Monroe Institute, conducting workshops across Europe, Canada, and the United States. In his book (IN)VISIBLE, Oliver shares deeply personal and captivating experiences that have strengthened his conviction that humans are much more than just their physical bodies.

Oliver is also a certified yoga instructor who has studied trance mediumship at Arthur Findlay College in England. In addition to this, he is an intuitive artist with a passion for abstract painting. In 2018, he further expanded his skill set, becoming a certified NeuroGraphica® Specialist. His love for painting and communicating with spirit guides has blossomed into a unique art form. Oliver channels supportive messages and guidance from the other side.

In 1992, Oliver relocated to Los Angeles, where he currently resides with his wife Anna-Barbara, and their cherished dog Lottie.

1 – IT BEGINS WITH A FAREWELL

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, French Philosopher and Jesuit Priest

I find myself in an unfamiliar room, bearing witness to my mother's final moments. Her body, once full of life and strength, has carried her through the trials and joys of life. Now it is time to go home.

I feel a gentle touch on my shoulder, light as an angel's. When I turn around, I'm greeted by the face of a woman in her mid-twenties, her smile full of encouragement.

"It's okay," she whispers.

She motions towards the frail, nearly lifeless body on the bed.

"That's not me," the young woman insists. "That's the expression of my fear and pain, a minute part of my entire self."

Her voice is all too familiar. As a child, her melodies lulled me to sleep, her words guided, comforted, and sometimes admonished me.

My gaze shifts back to the tired eyes of the woman on the sickbed, eyes that look at me apathetically.

"How can I let you go without forgetting you?" I find myself asking.

The answer comes even before I finish my last word.

"I will always be with you. At all times, in all places. I am the flower, the tree, and the sky. I am wherever you want to see me."

The young woman behind me gently strokes my hair as only a mother could.

As a teenager, I pushed away this hand in embarrassment.

Typical of a boy.

Today, I welcome her touch. It could be the last time, the final moment to feel her so close.

Turning back to her, she grants me another smile. Her love is unconditional. Complete. This youthful woman is my mother. Just as I knew

her when I was a little boy—without fear, without pain, and without wrinkles. She will leave those behind on her sickbed when she is ready to go.

As if through a veil, I see the young and the old merging. Her breath is so shallow; I can hardly perceive it anymore.

I sit here, watching my mother's passing.

The hospital room recedes from my awareness, replaced by a highway stretching out before me. It extends straight into the horizon, bordered by desert on both sides. It's a Friday afternoon, and I'm en route from Las Vegas to Los Angeles.

Years ago, I would have dismissed this as a daydream. But now, I recognize it as an excursion, a journey far beyond the constraints of time and space.

I pull off at the next exit, park the car, and dial my parents' number. Hearing their voices, even though they are aged and not in the best of health, brings a sense of relief. They are still alive, and I find comfort in knowing that they will forever be present whenever I seek their presence or guidance in this dimension or another.

Following two decades of extensive consciousness exploration and profound personal experiences, I've come to understand that humans are multidimensional beings. Each one of us is an expression of universal consciousness, focused on the physical plane and manifested as individuals. We aren't possessors of consciousness; rather, consciousness possesses us.

One facet of our multidimensional existence is the innate ability to transcend the limits of the physical dimension. We can learn to expand our awareness and focus our attention on *non-physical dimensions.* What initially seems like a daunting task is a process that can be learned in a few steps. The prerequisites are as simple as the techniques themselves: curiosity, a sense of adventure, and an open mind—in whichever order you prefer.

One method to uncover your multidimensionality and broaden your personal spectrum of perception is to practice Out-of-Body Experiences (OBEs). This approach has provided me with insights into questions I have grappled with throughout my life. Consciousness exploration through OBEs is an ongoing journey where each answer I discover leads to more questions.

The primary one that has intrigued prophets and philosophers for centuries remains: Is there life after death?

However, not everyone exploring Out-of-Body Experiences is necessarily interested in the afterlife. I regularly encounter people who, while they are deeply fascinated by astral travel (or astral projection), choose not to delve into their mortality or interact with otherworldly dimensions.

For me, the process was the exact opposite. From a young age, I was profoundly curious about what happens after we die.

Today, an increasing number of scientists worldwide who seek answers are open to alternative theories and concepts previously dismissed as esoteric musings of marginal groups. Renowned researchers at esteemed universities have contemplated the possibility that our soul—regardless of its precise definition—persists beyond our physical death.

Opinions remain divided, but some bold pioneers have emerged in the meantime. One of them is Professor Hans-Peter Dürr, a former director of the Max Planck Institute for Physics in Munich, Germany, who clearly stated his conviction:

“What we term this mortal world is essentially material, the tangible. The afterlife represents everything else—the all-encompassing reality, the broader aspect. The body dies, but the spiritual quantum field persists. In that sense, I am immortal.”

Though this view is considered radical for a scientist, leaders of world religions have been preaching this for millennia. Hoping to fill churches and collection plates, Christianity, for example, describes heaven and hell, angels, and purgatory. Religions entice people with promises of eternal peace and warnings of damnation. Their followers often need to choose the “one” true religion—given they have the privilege of living in a society that doesn’t mandate a specific faith.

My grandmother once said, “But you must believe in something, or you have no foundation.”

“Do I really?” Even as a child, I questioned myself and resolved to unearth my own truth. But first, my parents had me don a suit for confirmation and recite the Lord’s Prayer.

“Or you’ll burn in hell!”

And who wants that?

Even though I received the blessing, my lack of confidence in organized religion did not change. I found it challenging to listen to the dull sermons of our small-town preacher, who, instead of speaking plainly, used parables and

waved his cassock in a threatening manner. His wide sleeves reminded me of large, black, ominous crows' wings.

Little of what he preached from the pulpit resonated with my inner voice. My ears perked up only when he showered the congregation with words like *death* and *resurrection*. The day of my confirmation marked the end of my brief tenure as a devout churchgoer.

What persisted was my fascination with death and dying. During school vacations, I often spent hours in the cemetery adjacent to my grandmother's property. I moved from grave to grave, captivated by the inscriptions on strangers' monuments and gravestones.

"Where are they now?" I continuously pondered.

I found it challenging to accept the concepts of heaven and hell. However, I had an inherent sense that there was more beyond the visible and tangible. Guided by my intuition, I began searching for new leads at a young age.

In an era when the internet was still a futuristic concept and esoteric information was scarce, I believed my only option was to communicate with the spirits of the deceased. To get my questions answered, I was willing to explore all avenues.

So, I scoured the local library for books with guidance on reaching the afterlife. Too embarrassed to borrow the books, I discretely removed the relevant pages and pocketed them. My curiosity surpassed my fear of being caught.

At home, I secluded myself in my room and practiced the art of necromancy. For hours, I stared into the flame of a candle, hoping to catch a glimpse of *the other side*—unfortunately, to no avail. I tried divination by glass moving and using a pendulum. After my homemade Ouija board also failed to initiate a conversation with the dead, I finally gave up, disheartened and frustrated.

Years later, my interest reignited when I stumbled upon a book by Robert A. Monroe in a German bookstore: *Journeys Out of the Body*. A brief look at the back cover filled my heart with excitement.

Monroe wrote that anyone could have a conscious OBE. The notion that the soul could leave the body and safely return to it captivated me immensely.

With some trepidation, I brought my precious find to the checkout counter. Would the store clerk smirk at my interest in the esoteric? Little did I

know how purchasing this book would redefine my life and set it on an entirely new path.

Today, approximately 30 years and hundreds of OBEs later, I am convinced that our physical incarnation is merely a minuscule, perhaps insignificant, part of our overall existence. It serves the evolutionary development of a multi-tiered system.

Death is simply an energetic shift. We relinquish our physical form and once again become fully aware of our soul's original source—the "great" consciousness. It's as if we're returning home. However, in truth, we never completely left our source. Our perception is merely limited during our brief sojourn on planet Earth.

Our awareness of daily life is focused on our physical reality. The system as a whole exists outside this restricted perspective.

This book's objective is not to answer humanity's questions regarding life and death. Instead, its aim is to inspire the reader to explore the subject themselves. What I describe in the following pages is based solely on my experience and subsequent beliefs.

How did I come to my insights?

Of course, I read numerous books by and about individuals who, in various ways, made contact with the afterlife. These included psychic mediums, people with near-death experiences, spiritual healers, and hypnosis therapists. Many of these accounts have reinforced my belief in life after death.

However, it's important to note that *belief* does not equate to *knowing*. True knowledge can only be acquired through direct personal experience. And I was determined to travel down that road, regardless of the cost.

On November 11, 2000, inspired by Robert Monroe's books, I set off to a six-day workshop at the Monroe Institute in Virginia. My luggage was filled with the hope of encountering something similar to what the institute's founder describes in his fascinating reports about Out-of-Body Experiences.

"It doesn't matter what religion you belong to or what faith you practice," said Monroe, whose Gateway Voyage program has been taught in its original form at the institute since the 1970s. "Simply be open to the possibility that you may be more than just your physical body."

I appreciated Monroe's emphasis on debunking old doctrines without replacing them with new ones. The foundation of the *Gateway Voyage*

program lies in the Hemi-Sync audio technology developed by Monroe. It enables individuals to achieve altered states of consciousness and sustain them. This, in turn, provides an ideal basis for Out-of-Body Experiences and perceptions.

Only six days and nights later, my previous worldview had been completely transformed. What I experienced during the *Gateway Voyage* program profoundly influenced my life from that point onward.

For the past twelve years, I have been an outreach trainer for the institute in Europe, Canada, and the United States, delivering lectures and organizing workshops. During this time, I have also developed my own programs inspired by the Monroe Method. In my workshops, I focus on providing participants with a safe space to make their own unique experiences.

Likewise, I want to encourage the readers of this book to embark on a journey of gaining new insights and perhaps even developing a completely new worldview.

This book is not a step-by-step guide on how to achieve an OBE. There are already plenty of those available. Instead, I describe my personal journey as a traveler between worlds and the challenges I faced. My intention is to facilitate the path to conscious OBE for others.

Expressing supernatural experiences can be challenging, as they require a supernatural vocabulary. Despite this obstacle, I place great importance on remaining as close as possible to the essence of my experiences.

I also recount the experiences of other individuals, changing some names and locations to respect their anonymity.

While I consciously avoid imparting any form of dogma, I have drawn certain conclusions from my encounters and experiences in non-physical realms, which I will share with my readers. These conclusions are based on circumstances I have observed in non-physical regions and interactions with non-physical beings. It is essential to understand that my conclusions are not absolute truths. Rather, they serve as guidance and navigation aid for the reader’s own explorations.

I deliberately refrain from presenting comprehensive syntheses or theories that may require revision as I gain further knowledge and experience.

My fascination with exploring the afterlife has grown tremendously over the years. Nothing is more exciting than meeting and communicating with those who have passed away.

While the departed can perceive us at any time, it's often difficult for the living to perceive them. Nevertheless, the deceased patiently attempt to contact us, often to reassure us that they are doing well or to express their love for us. Sometimes, they even have valuable information to share.

Unfortunately, in our loud and busy world, the subtle signals from our non-physical friends are often lost. To connect with our loved ones, we must learn to adjust our vibrational frequency accordingly. And that comes more easily to some people than others.

I believe those who embark on this learning process will be rewarded in many ways. Once the connection between the two worlds is established, both sides experience delight. And as a welcome side effect, the fear of death, which haunts many individuals from a young age, diminishes.

The afterlife is not our final destination and is not as far away as we might think. Most people perceive it as distant because their limited perspective, rooted in their daily lives, allows them only to glimpse fragments of that world.

Those who thoroughly study the subject, train, and refine their perception will discover that the dimension we call the afterlife can be found all around us and alongside us in this life.

Some individuals struggle to abandon old doctrines and embrace a new understanding of the world. We naturally hold onto what we know, as our thoughts and actions are dominated by habits that provide a sense of security and orientation. We often disregard new impulses and ideas that don't align with the profoundly ingrained worldview we've been taught or that challenge the accepted reality defined by most of our social and family circles.

Many people believe that they have already learned everything there is to know about the nature of humanity and the world through their studies in biology, geography, and religion. Changes could entail unexpected, possibly unpleasant consequences.

Here's some good news for those whose curiosity outweighs their commitment to their profoundly ingrained worldview: Anyone can visit the afterlife and communicate with the departed. If you're willing to open your heart and overcome self-doubt, you'll find it easy to transcend the limitations of the physical dimension, and your friends on the other side will be grateful.

Join me on a journey that could bring you closer to your destination than you ever thought possible. Expect plenty of surprises along the way.

Have a great trip!

2 – GATEWAY VOYAGE – A JOURNEY THROUGH THE PORTAL OF REALIZATION

"And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane
by those who could not hear the music."
Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Philosopher

November 11, 2000

My legs tremble as I disembark from the propeller plane at Charlottesville airport. Dazed from the turbulent hour-long flight, I'm relieved to be back on solid ground.

The fresh autumn air in Virginia provides a delightful contrast to California's consistent and mild climate. Seeing the deciduous trees along the highway fills me with joy, and I can't seem to get enough of the vibrant leaves.

The taxi ride to my accommodation takes less than 20 minutes. Since the flight has already strained my travel budget, I choose to spend the night at a cheap motel located on the city's outskirts, next to a busy road. I've waited for this day for five months. I took a week's vacation and traveled across the continent from the west coast to the east coast, hoping to learn more about the Out-of-Body Experiences described by Robert Monroe.

The room at the motel is run-down and has a musty smell, with paper-thin walls. I can hear someone showering next door, and the TV blares loudly. I feel restless, excited, and uncertain. After all, I have no idea what to expect from the *Gateway Voyage* in the upcoming days.

The constant background noise keeps me awake until the early hours, so I decide to buy two cans of beer and a pack of cigarettes from a minimart nearby. I actually did quit smoking several weeks earlier, but beer without cigarettes doesn't work, and cigarettes without beer certainly doesn't, either.

"I'll definitely put an end to this nonsense tomorrow!" I promise myself,

not for the first time.

The noise persists throughout the night, with flushing toilets, slamming doors, and squeaking beds. I'm already wide awake when the alarm goes off at seven. Suddenly, doubts creep in. The thought of spending six days with a group of strangers on an isolated campus in the middle of nowhere scares me. I'm not one to fit in easily. What if I don't get along with the other participants? Or if nothing significant happens and I've wasted more than two thousand dollars? My mind races with these thoughts.

At half past ten, the shuttle bus from the Monroe Institute arrives at the motel. There's no turning back now. Mike, the driver, greets me warmly as if we're old friends. The other four passengers turn out to be participants who were picked up from the airport before me. They bombard me with questions.

"Where are you from?" Dianne from Toronto asks.

"I'm originally from Germany," I reply, "but I've been living in California for many years!"

"Is this your first visit to the institute?"

I nod. The elderly lady throws her head back and laughs.

"Nothing will ever be the same again when you get back on this bus six days from now."

Dianne has already attended three courses at Monroe. This time, she's traveled all the way from Canada to participate in the *Lifeline* program, which runs parallel to the *Gateway Voyage*.

"You'll be staying at the Nancy Penn Center," she explains.

"Our program takes place about a mile away in Bob Monroe's former residence."

I'm impressed. I'm already familiar with Monroe's home from reading his books. I'd love to ask Dianne a few questions, but I don't have a chance to get a word in. The drive from Charlottesville takes 45 minutes, and only a few miles into the journey, my ears start ringing.

This is my first time in Virginia, and I'm surprised by the sparsely populated, hilly landscape. Occasionally, we pass a farm or a few modest wooden houses off the highway.

"Look over there!" Mike exclaims, pointing ahead.

"That's the house that inspired Earl Hammer to create the TV show *The Waltons*. Remember John-Boy and Jim-Bob?"

Everyone gets excited. The Waltons! Of course, who could ever forget

them?

We leave the highway and turn onto a narrow, winding road that ascends steeply. The closer we get to our destination, the more my anticipation builds.

“Perhaps we’ll meet again at the airport next week!” Dianne shouts after me when I unload my suitcase at the institute’s parking lot. “I can’t wait to hear what you have to share!”

I’m filled with awe as I gaze at the wooden front door of the Nancy Penn Center. This is the place I’ve read so much about, where Robert Monroe pursued his extrasensory studies, secluded from civilization amidst meadows and forests. The institute’s cornerstone was laid 26 years ago, and five years have gone by since Monroe passed away.

My thoughts are abruptly interrupted by one of the other participants tugging at my sleeve.

“Let’s go!” exclaims Ben, a rather big and tall guy in his mid-fifties from Kansas City, appearing hyper and impatient. “I’m sure they have food waiting for us.”

Tammy, one of the institute’s staff, welcomes us into the lobby.

“You are in number 19,” she says, pointing me in the right direction. “Your roommate’s name is Phil. He’s already checked in.”

Tammy leads me through a long corridor with dark wood paneling, giving the building the feel of an oversized ski lodge.

Curiously, I step into the small room. Next to the two desks and two clothes rails, there are wooden cubicle enclosures on both sides of the door, each adorned with a heavy, dark curtain. Behind each curtain lies a twin-size mattress.

“That’s your CHEC Unit,” Tammy explains, pointing to the left. “CHEC stands for Controlled Holistic Environmental Chamber. This is where you’ll do your exercises.”

I’m intrigued.

“And where are the bedrooms?” I cautiously inquire.

Tammy laughs.

“The CHEC Unit is also your bed.”

I wonder how long it will take before I get claustrophobic inside the 35-inches-wide and just under 80-inches-long enclosure. But I decide not to voice my concern.

After Tammy leaves the room, I take a closer look at my CHEC Unit.

There are headphones on the pillow, with most of the cable hidden inside the wall. Loudspeakers are set into the sides on the left and right. Above the foot of the mattress hang three colorful lightbulbs, reminiscent of the light organ in small-town discos from my youth in the eighties.

Apart from three tiny desk drawers and the clothes rail, there's nowhere to place my personal belongings. Now I understand why they advised us to bring as little as possible.

I begin exploring the long hallways. There are no private bathrooms, but ample showers and toilets along the corridor. A staircase leads from the accommodation wing to a kind of foyer.

"This is the Fox Den," I hear Tammy say from behind. "Bob's wife Nancy was very fond of foxes, as you can see from the decorations."

Hesitant, I descend the stairs and notice a group engaged in a lively discussion.

"Come and join us," an elderly man invites me, gesturing towards a vacant chair beside him.

The conversation revolves around paranormal perceptions and supernatural experiences. Bill from Texas wants to know if I've encountered any. All eyes are on me. I spontaneously recall an event from my younger years, but before I can speak, everyone suddenly turns their gaze toward the stairway. Bill jumps up and raises both arms.

"Laurie!" he exclaims with delight.

"William!" the woman on the stairs shouts back, her voice rough and scratchy, akin to a chain smoker's.

They embrace, and then Laurie addresses the group.

"Welcome to the Monroe Institute! I'm glad you found us."

Robert Monroe's daughter sits down beside me, filling me with awe. Laurie has been the institute's director since her father's passing. She's delighted to learn that I'm from Germany.

"We have many visitors from Germany, more than from any other European country."

Laurie and I converse for half an hour, discussing her father, the institute, and even my home country. After our chat, she heads to work and hugs me like an old friend.

"I've got a hunch that we'll be seeing more of you here in the future, Oliver," she says, leaving me amazed. "And my instincts are never wrong,"

she adds with a wink.

Throughout the afternoon, more workshop participants from various countries, including Great Britain, Australia, Canada and Kuwait, as well as Alaska, Hawaii, and other states, arrive at the Fox Den. Many of them seem visibly exhausted after long flights.

Despite their different cultures, the group members maintain a surprisingly informal atmosphere.

The animated conversations halt when our two trainers, Karen Malik and John Cahill, enter the room. They announce that they would like to speak to each of us individually before dinner.

I'm the first one called.

John leads me to a spacious couch in the adjacent room, wasting no time on small talk.

"Why did you choose the *Gateway Voyage*?" he asks. "What are your expectations for the program?"

Having been introduced to the subject of Out-of-Body Experiences through Robert Monroe's books, I tell him want to have an OBE like many first-time visitors to the institute.

"Your expectations may be too narrow," John cautions. "While it's good to have a specific goal, focusing solely on one aspect of the program could cause you to miss out on other, even more valuable experiences. The *Gateway Voyage* offers much more than just OBEs."

Although I don't fully grasp John's message, I simply nod, deciding to take things as they come and remain open to whatever unfolds.

Returning to the Fox Den, I sit next to Ann from Seattle. Attending the Monroe Institute has been her dream for years.

"I am here to prepare myself for the next stage of my journey," she says, her voice weak and frail, making it difficult to hear her clearly.

"What journey are you talking about?" I inquire.

"I'm still feeling very well. But that can soon change at my age," she replies.

The 86-year-old takes a deep breath and clasps my left hand. "I'm not afraid of dying. In fact, I'm excited about it because I've long known that I am more than just my physical body. However, it would be nice to explore the path to the afterlife beforehand."

Uncertain how to respond to her candidness, I'm both impressed and

startled. Ann tightens her grip on my hand.

"Let's be friends," she suggests, looking at me expectantly.

"I would like that very much," I reply.

Ann's bony hand gently caresses my forearm. We sit together in silence for a short while before her head slumps forward. Seconds later, I hear her soft snoring. My new friend has dozed off.

After dinner, Karen and John await us at the entrance of the assembly room, politely requesting each participant to deposit their wristwatch into the baskets they are holding.

"This week, we want you to forget about linear time," Karen announces. "We will wake you early in the morning and ring the big bells in the Fox Den and on the porch to indicate the start of each new program activity."

Spending a week without knowing the time doesn't particularly appeal to me. It's only now that I realize there are no wall clocks anywhere in the building. Hesitant, I place my watch into the basket, remove my shoes, and enter the room.

The floor is adorned with a thick, fluffy white carpet. We begin with an introduction to the Hemi-Sync technology, followed by information about the preparatory steps integral to each exercise. This process involves several elements.

"First, you will hear the sound of waves, which serves as the starting signal," John explains. "Next, we have the energy conversion box, where you envision a lockable crate to contain any distracting thoughts. Then we proceed with the resonant tuning, which involves vocalizing vowel sounds to stimulate energy exchange within the physical body."

Once back in my room, I cautiously enter the CHEC Unit for the first time and immediately feel a sense of claustrophobia. The wooden enclosure is even narrower than it appeared from the outside, providing barely enough space to lie comfortably without touching its sides. I don't dare to fully close the heavy black linen curtain.

Through the speaker system, John instructs us to put on our headphones and activate the Ready Light. The small red lamp indicates to the trainers in the control room that everyone is in place and ready for the upcoming exercise. Shortly after, I hear the soothing sound of ocean waves.

Here we go!

Robert Monroe's voice is dull, reminiscent of a radio announcer from the 1950s. I struggle to contain my interfering thoughts in the imaginary crate. Then, a choir signals the start of the resonant tuning. I am drowning out my thoughts by chanting vowels.

A few minutes later, the choir ceases, and Monroe recites his famous Gateway affirmation:

"I am more than my physical body. Because I am more than physical matter, I can perceive that which is greater than the physical world.

Therefore, I deeply desire to expand, to experience, to know, to understand, to control, to use such greater energies and energy systems as may be beneficial and constructive to me and to those who follow me.

Also, I deeply desire the help and cooperation, the assistance, the understanding of those individuals whose wisdom, development and experience are equal or greater than my own.

I ask their guidance and protection from any influence or any source that might provide me with less than my stated desires."

I attempt to follow the guided relaxation, but my heart beats louder and louder. *Why on earth am I feeling so excited?*

Bob slowly counts from 1 to 10. I feel a slight pressure in my skull. My right hand begins to tingle as if it has fallen asleep. It's unpleasant, but there's nothing I can do about it. I'm unable to move my hand. The heaviness I now perceive is more dominant than the desire to stop the tingling.

For a moment, I feel as if I'm sinking. Before I can delve deeper into this sensation, Monroe's voice continues through my earphones, sounding muffled:

"Focus 10. You are now in Focus 10, the state where your body is deeply relaxed, and your mind is fully awake."

Unexpected images flash in my mind's eye, constantly changing within fractions of a second. They're so fleeting that I can't grasp any of them.

The tingling sensation in my hand subsides, and suddenly, my body feels as heavy as lead. I'm momentarily frightened. Thoughts race uncontrollably through my mind. This must be what it feels like to be paralyzed.

3 – FIRST EXPERIENCES WITH HEMISPHERIC SYNCRONIZATION

"I believe Hemi-Sync has enabled me to return to a realm similar to that which I visited deep in coma, but without having to be deathly ill. But just as in my dreams of flying."
Eben Alexander, Author of
"Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife"

Those who've ventured into the realm of meditation know that there are many styles and schools. Each variant presents unique techniques and methodologies.

The goal and purpose of meditation can also significantly differ, mainly hinging on the underlying philosophy.

Many people turn to meditation to achieve relaxation or boost self-love, while some aim for grander goals like human augmentation or even enlightenment—all while perched on their cushions.

My understanding of meditation was pretty rudimentary before the *Gateway Voyage*, limited to brief meditative moments at the end of my yoga sessions.

It was only through my engagement with Hemi-Sync, an audio technology pioneered by Robert Monroe, that I started exploring alternative approaches to meditation. Today, I find it hard to imagine life without my regular practice. I need the quiet to regroup, heal, and more importantly, find refuge from the daily grind.

Hemi-Sync still forms a crucial component of Monroe Sound Science, a sound technology created by the Monroe Institute. It enables the practitioner to fall into a deep meditative state within minutes and maintain it over a prolonged period.

Monroe Sound Science has evolved significantly over the past 50 years,

consistently enhancing its capabilities through ongoing research and advancements in audio technology.

To explain the technology in detail would go beyond the confines of this book. Therefore, I'll stick to its crucial principles.

The human brain responds to rhythmic sounds by generating specific brainwave patterns. Thus, consistent drumming can induce relaxation in listeners. Slow, rhythmic music has a similar impact.

Scientists have been fascinated by the influence of varying sound and tone patterns for centuries. However, one doesn't need a scientific background to perceive the effect of sound and rhythm on the brain.

Consider, for instance, two tuning forks calibrated to slightly distinct pitches – say, one to 400 Hz and the other to 405 Hz. When struck simultaneously, these sounds amalgamate in the air to form a third sound, a so-called monaural vibration of 5 Hz.

Musicians, especially those playing string instruments like the guitar or violin, are very familiar with these vibrations because they constantly tune their instruments. The monaural vibration disappears only when the tuning fork aligns with the relevant string.

However, when the two different sounds are separately channeled into each ear via headphones, the brain constructs a third sound from the 5 Hz difference, which is known as a phantom sound or binaural beat. The right and left hemispheres of the brain adjust to this new frequency to establish equilibrium. This phenomenon results in hemispheric synchronization, a harmonized state of the brain.

In most individuals, the brain's left hemisphere manages logic, reasoning, and analytical thinking, while the right hemisphere operates intuitively, visually, emotionally, and in a less coordinated manner. When the brainwaves in the right and left hemispheres synchronize, the heart and mind operate as a single unit.

Hemi-Sync provides a straightforward yet incredibly efficient method to modify our brainwaves. Over its extended development phase, the technology was fine-tuned to such a degree that the head of a Zen Buddhist temple in Vancouver, British Columbia, was astonished after spending a few days at Monroe. He declared that Gateway students could achieve meditative states within a week that had taken him years of dedicated practice to reach.

Monroe developed a spectrum of specific frequency compositions to support various meditative states and designed a kind of map to facilitate easy navigation through the different levels of consciousness for the user.

He dubbed the altered states he explored as Focus levels, or “F” for short, and assigned each a number between 10 and 35. However, he referred to waking consciousness as C1. Monroe never clarified why he opted for the letter C, although it’s likely shorthand for consciousness.

One of the primary objectives of the *Gateway Voyage* program is to educate participants about and enable them to differentiate between Focus levels 10 through 21.

I am experiencing firsthand how distinctively the brain reacts to the Hemi-Sync technology’s frequency combinations while I lie still, flat on my back. At this moment, I am unable to move even my little finger.

To prevent panic onset, I focus on breathing—a technique I learned through yoga. Inhale. Exhale. Fear cannot find room in the present moment. Inhale. Exhale. Here and now.

It works. I start to calm down and relax. I barely sense my body. It feels as if my mind has separated from it. I am enveloped in profound stillness.

That is until the sound of someone snoring breaks in. The noise irritates me, and I attempt to locate its source. Is it Phil, my roommate? Or is it coming from the individual on the other side of the CHEC Unit’s wall? I am clueless as the direction of the sound keeps shifting.

The snoring becomes increasingly annoying, and I feel almost relieved when Monroe’s voice comes through the headphones.

“It is now time to return to waking consciousness!”

Bob slowly counts down from 10 to 1. As he reaches 1, I am surprised at how effortlessly I can move my arms and legs again.

Following the trainers’ instructions, I jot down my observations in a notebook and head to the meeting in the White Carpet Room—the designated gathering area.

My experience with Focus 10 aligns with most participants’ accounts. Monroe’s description of this state as “body asleep—mind awake” couldn’t be more precise.

Only Ann’s experience of Focus 10 diverged significantly:

“Body asleep—mind also asleep,” she shares, inciting amusement in everyone.

“I remember the affirmation, and then I must have dozed off. I only woke up when the exercise was over.”

My first night in the CHEC Unit passes surprisingly well without any claustrophobic feelings.

The calming sound of waves emitted from the speakers, situated at the head of the wooden enclosure, combined with Hemi-Sync frequencies, fosters a soothing sleep rhythm. After six hours, I feel well-rested, rejuvenated, and energized.

It’s still dark when I step onto the porch outside the Nancy Penn Center. The air is crisp; the setting couldn’t be more picturesque. Moonlight softly illuminates the Blue Ridge Mountains and casts a radiant glow on the monumental Brazilian quartz crystal situated at the edge of the institute’s expansive grounds.

I’m compelled to examine this colossal crystal up close. Only when I’m standing directly in front of it can I grasp its immense size. Carefully, I press my body against the crystal, which towers over me. Its surface is icy cold, but surprisingly, I begin to feel warmth after just a few minutes. I can undeniably sense its powerful energy.

Before breakfast, the first chime of the day signals the beginning of the optional yoga class. I’m in. After all, I’ve been practicing yoga for many years. Shaaron Honeycutt, an instructor of Iyengar Yoga, is quite candid and straightforward. According to her, comprehending one’s body is paramount before attempting to leave it.

Later in the dining room, over scrambled eggs and toast, she admits to me that she actually finds Out-of-Body Experiences somewhat overhyped.

Shaaron quickly noticed my good grasp of the different asanas.

“Have you ever thought about becoming a yoga teacher?”

I shrug my shoulders, but secretly, I’ve repeatedly entertained the idea. My work as a television journalist and tour guide lost its charm some time ago.

“I’m over 30,” I say, “and nowhere near as flexible and fit as a yoga teacher should be.”

Shaaron disagrees.

“It doesn’t matter if you can tie your legs together behind your head. You’ll inspire many people when you love what you’re doing and possess the necessary knowledge and sensitivity.”

I can’t stop pondering her words. Is Shaaron right? Am I selling myself short? Should I start from scratch at my age? Especially now that I’m doing well financially.

The sound of the bell interrupts my thoughts. Like the other 23 participants, I can hardly wait to return to the CHEC Unit and put on my headphones.

Today’s first exercise involves the final step in Monroe’s preparation process: activating the REBAL, the Resonant Energy Balloon.

We start by revisiting the elements of preparation we already know. Then, I am asked to visualize energy erupting from my head, enveloping my physical body, and reentering it through the soles of my feet. Next, the energy needs to rise and burst out from my head again until a stable cycle is established.

I find this challenging since I don’t have a particularly vivid imagination. The more I attempt to conjure images in my head, the more chaotic it becomes. A few minutes later, I’m wide awake again and incredibly frustrated.

I try once more, only to fail a second time.

It feels like I’ve lost control over my mind. Random thoughts drift through my head, and I clearly struggle to master the exercise. My REBAL begins to resemble a whirlwind more and more.

However, once the Hemi-Sync frequencies begin to kick in, it doesn’t take long before I experience the first signs of Focus 10. This time, it feels much easier. Like last time, my right hand tingles, and the physical heaviness is almost familiar.

I’m slowly becoming irritated when someone starts snoring again. I try my best to ignore the sound, but I can’t. After what feels like forever, I hear Bob say:

“It’s now time to return to waking consciousness.”

I’m already awake. Irritated, I open my eyes and stare into the dark inside the CHEC Unit.

I lift my left arm to flip the light switch, which sits approximately three feet above the mattress on the enclosure’s interior wall. But my fingers can’t grasp the switch. Instead, my hand and forearm glide through the solid wooden wall.

I distinctly perceive the texture of the wood, inch by inch. When I realize

what's happening, my arm springs back, and my body goes limp. I'm so startled that I don't dare to breathe.

What on earth just happened?

My left arm is still in the same position I had put it at the beginning of the exercise: underneath the bed cover. My heart is racing like crazy. I can't come up with a rational explanation.

How could my hand have passed through the wall when it is under the cover at the same time?

When I share my experience with the group and the trainers, they deduce that I had experienced a so-called partial projection. This is a type of OBE where your consciousness only partially separates from the physical body.

I'm captivated and continue to ponder this phenomenon hours later.

During the next exercise, I find it challenging to relax as I persistently try to recreate what happened earlier. I'm eager to experience a full astral projection. But because it doesn't come naturally, I grow restless.

I was told that you can't force an Out-of-Body Experience. Yet, the more I try to surrender, the more I find myself clinging to my aspiration of soaring through the air with my energy body.

In the late afternoon, I seek advice from John.

"What exactly do you hope to achieve with an OBE?" he inquires.

I can't answer his question. I was so enraptured by the prospect of learning to leave my physical body that I hadn't considered what might happen next.

John suggests that I reevaluate my approach.

"Carefully consider what you would do if you achieved an OBE. Ask yourself what truly matters to you, and then articulate your explicit intention. Writing it down often clarifies the mind," he advises.

John takes a deep breath and pauses for a moment before continuing.

"Remember our conversation from yesterday? If you cling to a certain expectation, you only get in your own way."

John's suggestions prompt me to reassess the situation. Had I been too naive or impulsive? Should I have been more prepared before traveling all the way to distant Virginia?

I take a long walk to gather my thoughts and decide to focus less on having an OBE and instead follow the program without a personal agenda.

Before introducing another exercise, Karen reviews the individual components of the preparation process.

“The steps remain consistent for each exercise. That’s why memorizing the process is crucial,” she emphasizes. “From now on, you’ll be responsible for your own preparation.”

Since I struggled significantly with visualizing the REBAL during the previous exercise, I ask Karen for guidance. Surprisingly, other participants express similar concerns.

“Each of you must discover your own non-physical channels of perception,” Karen explains. “For some, these may be more visual, while for others, they might be more intuitive or emotional.”

A hands-on exercise follows to reinforce our understanding of energies. The trainer pairs us off and demonstrates how to sense the other person’s energy field with our hands.

I’m fortunate to have Karen as my partner. Under her direction, I distinctly perceive the energy field around her, which immediately boosts my confidence in my own abilities.

Back in the CHEC Unit, our next task is to construct an energy tool, a universal aid that allows us to purposefully direct energy in the non-physical realm.

The concept of an energy tool is completely foreign to me, and I have no idea how to create something out of nothing. Regardless, I strive to maintain an open mind.

Closing my eyes, I almost immediately sink into deep relaxation. When Robert Monroe’s voice begins to flow from the headphones, I am already busy activating the energy field around me. This time, I avoid forcing visual impressions, instead opting to “sense” the energy ball enveloping me.

There’s no whooshing sensation around me, yet I can perceive a faint pulsation. Eventually, I clearly feel the energy field around me stabilizing, cloaking me like a coat, and my physical awareness fades.

A gentle, pleasurable vibration follows this pulsation. Even though I can’t feel my physical body, this vibration seems to permeate every single cell.

I lie there, observing. The vibration gradually intensifies until Monroe’s voice halts it. He instructs us to visualize a spark of light gradually forming into a rod of glowing energy. I’m supposed to mentally hold it in my energy hand and project different colors onto it.

When this doesn't immediately work, frustration bubbles up. I can't imagine the light rod, let alone the hand to hold it. My left, analytical brain hemisphere takes over, my inner critic whispering, "What nonsense."

But I try to ignore this doubter, taking deep breaths.

Don't give up!

Once again, I shift my focus to the Resonant Energy Balloon. To my surprise, I sense the field immediately. A few seconds later, I refocus on the energy rod.

"How would it feel to hold a glowing rod in my hand?" I ponder.

No sooner have I posed the question than a completely unexpected, angelic female figure appears in my mind's eye. She has long, dark hair framing her exotic face, wearing brown shorts and a yellow T-shirt instead of angelic attire. She holds a glowing light rod.

"Here, Oliver, take my energy bar tool! I don't need it anymore," she smiles, offering it to me.

I am so bewildered that I immediately return to waking consciousness. The abrupt transition leaves me feeling dizzy, my thoughts a chaotic jumble.

Unable to relax enough to complete the exercise, I reach for my notebook.

John and Karen have frequently suggested jotting down every perception, as experiences outside waking consciousness can be as fleeting as dreams. As I scribble down notes, I recall the image of the entity. Was it merely a figment of my imagination? A delusion? Was it my wishful thinking that led to this perception?

During the group's gathering in the assembly room to discuss the exercise, I sit in the first row opposite the trainers, eagerly listening to the other participants' enviable accounts.

Most have no problem at all visualizing. In fact, some even report that their mentally generated images rapidly take on a life of their own, transporting them into what seems like a movie. I'm far from achieving that.

As I'm about to express my disappointment over the failed exercise, a participant at the back of the room speaks up.

"Well, I found it very easy to create the energy tool, and it only took a few seconds. Then I thought I'd check on the others. I first sensed Ann; she was standing there, doing nothing. When I tried to get her attention, she didn't react."

Ann, seated diagonally behind me on a couch, claps her hands in

amusement.

“I slept through the entire exercise, start to finish.”

The group laughs.

“That explains it,” the lady at the back of the room comments.

“But that’s not all,” she continues. “Next, I saw Oliver. He seemed distraught. He found it hard to create the energy rod, so I simply gave him my tool.”

The room falls silent. I feel everyone’s gaze on me. Did I hear right?

I jump up and look around.

“You are Oliver, aren’t you?”

The woman’s voice carries a note of uncertainty. I nod and hold up my notebook.

“I’m Maya,” she introduces herself.

The yellow T-shirt, the khaki shorts, the long, dark hair—everything matches.

“What you’ve just described is written in this notebook, Maya. I don’t know how you did it, but I saw you clearly.”

The other participants begin to whisper excitedly. I turn to the trainers, who nod at me with encouragement.

“How is that possible?” I ask aloud when I’m alone in my room later. “And where was I when Maya found me, if not in this CHEC Unit?”

At dinner, I pose these questions to John, hoping for a sensible explanation. But John isn’t ready to provide the answers. Instead, he suggests I find them myself.

“When he was alive, Robert Monroe stressed: ‘Don’t believe anything I tell you. Search for yourself and gather your own experiences.’ He gave us a map, but we must undertake the journey ourselves.”

Reluctant and unwilling to embark on this journey alone, I try talking to Maya. She seems experienced enough to potentially help me.

But the woman from Hawaii merely shrugs.

“Just let it sink in,” she suggests. “I think we are going to see a lot more in the coming days. And perhaps the answers will just come to you.”

I envy her composure.

“How did you even find me?” I probe.

Maya tilts her head and smiles mischievously.

“I asked my spirit guides to lead me where I was needed most.”

Her reply raises more questions.

“Who are these spirit guides?”

“I don’t really know. All I can say is they’re always there when I need their help.”

Spirit guides? Sounds like a wild fantasy to me. But I also can’t disregard our shared experience. Maya and I definitely met. There must be an explanation. But spirit guides…?

As if she can read my thoughts, Maya suggests a new approach.

“Why don’t you try to perceive your own spirit guides? Just like you experienced your energy field during the last exercise.”

“Are you saying I have spirit guides, too?”

“Absolutely. Everyone has helpers in the spirit world. And everyone perceives them differently. Some see angels. Some see religious figures. Shamans work with power animals.”

“How do you do it?”

“I see very clear images,” Maya tells me. “One of them is an old medieval monk. Another one appears as a man with a wolf’s head.”

I can’t hide my skepticism and shake my head doubtfully. But Maya remains persistent.

“Why don’t you give it a shot and see what comes up? You’ve nothing to lose.”

I recall Monroe’s books. He also wrote about his encounters with entities who guided and accompanied him. But if I truly have spirit guides, wouldn’t they have made contact before?

Everything is new and confusing. Only three days ago, I had no experience of the subject at all. And now I’m supposed to close my eyes and look for my spirit guides? Every halfway normal person, including my past self, would think I’m crazy.

On the other hand, Maya is right. I’ve nothing to lose.

Before I can start looking for my guides, Karen and John introduce us to another level of consciousness: Focus 12. Robert Monroe described this level as a state of expanded awareness. In the upcoming exercise, we will explore the differences between Focus 10 and Focus 12.

This time, the preparatory process goes off without a hitch and I immediately perceive the REBAL. The more I relax, the more I feel the vibration. It’s not just within me, but also around me. I am part of the

vibration. I am the vibration!

The clarity of this thought, which I didn't consciously formulate, amazes me. It just arose. And with it came the sudden realization: I am part of the vibration. I am energy. And that energy can move.

Now, I clearly feel the movement, knowing that my physical body is lying there, asleep. But suddenly, my consciousness is part of another state, one that transcends physical matter.

I experience this state intensely, even if only for a few moments. Shortly thereafter, I reunite with my physical body.

When I immerse myself in the vibration again, my awareness of my body disappears. For the first time, I experience what Monroe describes in the Gateway Affirmation:

"I am more than my physical body."

I want to reach for my notebook but don't dare to interrupt this special moment of insight for a mundane act such as writing. To clear my mind, I focus on my breathing.

And there it is again. More pronounced and louder than before: the snoring. The incredibly annoying snoring. I decide to bring it up with the trainers. Maybe I can switch rooms.

I listen intently and am now sure that the snorer is in the next room. It's hard to move my head, but I want to press my ear to the wall to be absolutely certain.

When I manage to turn my head to the side, I hear a loud gurgling sound, then silence. No more snoring. Suddenly, it hits me like a ton of bricks: I am the one snoring! I have been listening to myself snoring and didn't even realize it.

Wow! My body was truly asleep while my mind was wide awake.

Armed with this new understanding, I refocus on the exercise. Thanks to the Hemi-Sync signals, it doesn't take long for the familiar heaviness of Focus 10 to set in.

Then Robert Monroe instructs us to count from 10 to 12 to change our level of consciousness. A loud hissing sound from the audio carrier, reminiscent of an overhead jet plane, signals the adjustment of the tone frequencies.

My breathing halts, and I struggle for air as my chest expands. Then tranquility.

I’m no longer breathing; I’m being breathed. Something breathes me. As air escapes from my lungs, my awareness also expands. It’s as if my brain suddenly sends antennas out in all directions.

My head feels as weightless as a helium balloon whose thin skin can be stretched indefinitely. Unlike in Focus 10, I feel nothing but a pleasant lightness. I float and expand far beyond the limits of my physical body.

Monroe’s voice interrupts my bliss with the instruction to return to Focus 10. I really don’t want to, but the Hemi-Sync signals facilitate the change, and a few moments later, I feel a sort of external pressure.

It’s like someone trying to cram a large gob of cotton candy into a tiny can. My head grows heavier and heavier. I can feel my physical body but can’t move it.

A short while later, Monroe guides us again from Focus 10 to Focus 12. This time, I also struggle to breathe.

Once my breath returns, my awareness noticeably expands, and I experience extreme lightness and infinite vastness again.

I focus my attention on my ethereal environment. Snapshots appear in my mind’s eye. But the images are too transient to interpret. They disappear as quickly as they appear in the expanse of Focus 12.

I let myself drift without any clear intentions. I float. I glide. It’s neither dark nor light. Rarely have I felt such euphoria.

The phrase “I am more than my physical body” now carries a new and profound meaning. My experience has transformed what was once only a premise into a fact. Into a new truth which irrevocably changes my understanding of the world.

I’m jolted when the curtain of my CHEC Unit is drawn aside, and Phil, my roommate, peeks in.

“Are you okay?” he asks worriedly, raising his eyebrows.

It takes me a moment to sit up.

“That exercise was quite intense.”

My voice sounds as if I’m intoxicated. Phil laughs.

“I felt the same,” he replies. “I was fully out.”

“What do you mean by fully out?”

“Out of body! I found myself flying over the Nancy Penn Center and the crystal, over the trees and the hills,” he tells me excitedly, spreading his arms as if he were in flight. “I saw a shoe lying on the roof.”

“Why should there be a shoe on the roof? That’s absurd.”

“I have no idea. But let’s go and check.”

I’m somewhat reluctant as I climb out of the narrow CHEC Unit to follow Phil through the long corridor, which ends at the staircase of a tower-like annex. With an energy that’s incomprehensible to me, Phil dashes up the spiral staircase to the rooftop terrace.

The view is breathtaking. I inhale the crisp autumn air, feeling increasingly alert and grounded. The unobstructed vista, the colorful foliage, the absolute tranquility —it’s downright heavenly.

Phil taps my shoulder and points at something.

“Check it out, man!” he exclaims, pointing his finger. “There’s a shoe back there.”

I’m just as astonished as he is. Indeed, Phil had an Out-of-Body Experience and flew over the institute’s roof. I struggle to hide my envy.

“How did you do it?” I ask him.

He shrugs.

“I wish I knew. It just happened. I can hardly believe it myself.”

When we reenter the assembly room, several participants already discuss their experiences in Focus 12.

“Such vastness!” exclaims Melinda, a nurse from New York.

She spreads her arms out so wide that she accidentally clips her neighbor. I can understand her euphoria all too well. But what, I wonder, can I do in —or with —that vastness?

“Focus 12 is extremely well-suited for nonverbal communication,” Karen explains. “This level of consciousness allows us to make contact with our spirit guides, for example.

My ears perk up.

“But some of us already did that in Focus 10,” I interject.

“That’s true.”

Karen goes into more detail. “In Focus 10, our body is asleep while our mind is fully awake. However, the mind does have the ability to proceed to another level from Focus 10. Hemi-Sync aids our intention but doesn’t confine us to a specific level. Therefore, it’s not particularly surprising when the mind takes its own path.”

Phil asks what could have triggered his OBE.

“An Out-of-Body Experience in the classical sense can happen anytime

you’re in a state of deep relaxation, even without a specific intention,” John explains. “OBEs often occur when we least expect them and aren’t holding onto a fixed idea.”

Unfortunately, the trainer doesn’t want to delve any deeper into the subject at this point. Instead, he invites those who haven’t yet had a chance to speak to describe their impressions of Focus 12.

Many echo my sentiments. They relished the boundless expanse but had no other expectations beyond that.

John suggests we use the next exercise to ask questions and receive answers.

We often receive symbols, scents, physical sensations, or brief image sequences to decipher.

“Who provides these? Where do they come from?” The woman beside me quizzes him.

“That’s another question you can ask when you’re in a state of expanded awareness,” John says. “Just stay open-minded. And those of you who’ve already established a connection with your spirit guides can use the exercise to strengthen that connection.”

Back in the CHEC Unit, I follow the sound signals, first into Focus 10, then into Focus 12. Again, I experience a notable shortness of breath followed by the overwhelming sensation of the vastness—this time, even more intense than before. My mind extends its antennas. I’ve arrived in Focus 12.

“Ask your first question,” Robert Monroe’s voice instructs. “Trust that you will receive an answer in a way you can easily understand.”

To simplify the process, I heed John’s advice and initially pose a question that requires a clear Yes or No answer.

“Should I train to become a yoga teacher next year?” I mentally ask, feeling slightly ridiculous.

Nothing. I wait, but there’s no response. After an entire minute, I repeat the question. “Should I train as a yoga teacher next year?” My left leg twitches, but still no answer.

Robert Monroe’s voice comes in again:

“You can now ask another question or repeat the first one if the answer needs more clarification.”

“Should I train as a yoga teacher next year?” I ask for the third time.

Even before I finish formulating the question in my mind, my left leg twitches again.

Didn't John mention something about physical signals earlier?

"Is that the answer?" I spontaneously ask. And again, I feel the sensation in my left leg.

When Monroe's voice prompts me once more to pose my question, I rephrase it.

"Should I wait until 2002 to train as a Yoga teacher?"

This time, my right leg twitches.

If the twitching of the left leg signifies a Yes, then the movement of the right leg must mean No. But wouldn't that be too simple?

I decide to dismiss my inner skeptic this time. At least I've found a method that I might be able to refine. I feel a slight sense of accomplishment.

Phil pulls back the curtain of his CHEC Unit and looks at me.

"So?" I ask, intrigued.

"I don't even know where to start," he confesses. "I met my spirit guide. He presented himself as a bear and showed me many interesting things. I didn't need to ask him anything. He already knew what I wanted and provided detailed answers. It was simply amazing! What about you? How did you do?"

I take a deep breath.

"My legs twitched."

Phil tilts his head.

"And?"

"Nothing. That was it. First the left leg and then the right."

Phil bursts into laughter.

"You better not say anything," I warn him, "or I'll find a different roommate."

I can't help but wonder why Phil is having these incredible experiences and I'm not.

Could I be doing something wrong?

4 – SPACE WITHOUT TIME AND THE BRIDGE TO THE AFTERLIFE

“One’s destination is never a place but a new way of seeing things.”
Henry Miller, Author

My self-doubt gnaws at me as I head to the assembly room, but Karen tries to lift my spirits.

“Everyone’s journey is unique. Being able to differentiate your perceptions is a big step. You’re on the right track and far ahead of many others.”

Her words offer little comfort.

However, hearing about other participants’ experiences lifts my spirits. Only a handful had experiences similar to what Phil encountered.

Ann, as it turns out, slept through the entire exercise once more, and found it amusing. It becomes apparent that most of the group members are struggling to trust their perceptions.

When I share my experience with my twitching legs, Melinda chimes in enthusiastically.

“Thank you, Oliver! Thank you!” she exclaims, raising her arms in jubilation. “I was so frustrated because I didn’t receive any answers to my questions. But my arms kept jerking. I shrugged it off as random muscle spasms.”

Melinda looks relieved.

“That’s exactly why we gather here after each exercise,” John explains. “Each person who shares their experience with the group contributes enormously and inspires the others.”

Although I remain skeptical about this new form of communication between me and my supposed spirit guides, I decide to give the process a chance and explore its possibilities further.

More exercises in Focus 12 follow. Gradually, I allow myself to trust the

physical signals and accept them as answers. However, not every question can be addressed with a simple Yes or No.

“You shouldn’t shy away from complex questions,” Maya advises, “or you’ll stagnate and cease progressing.”

She urges me to listen to my inner voice and trust my intuition.

“Do you remember Robert Monroe’s writings about sudden insights and ‘thought balls’ being passed to him?”

I recall Monroe’s works very well. But not everything he wrote makes sense to me.

“I’m sorry, Maya, but the term ‘thought ball’ doesn’t mean much to me.”

“Monroe came up with the term because there was no existing word to describe the phenomenon. He likely wanted to avoid leading the reader to incorrect assumptions. Don’t get hung up on the terminology. Try looking at all of this as a playground of consciousness.”

And this is exactly how I approach the next exercise called “Five Messages”. The objective is to seek messages while in the state of expanded awareness. It is about discovering what is essential for my further development at this point in my life.

I let go of the expectation of meeting my personal spirit guides, and the idea of receiving as many as five messages during one exercise seems overly ambitious. I would be content with just one.

So, I’m even more astounded when I do indeed receive clear and comprehensible impressions during all five stages of the exercise. However, the content of the messages surprises me the most.

In response to the question, “What is the fifth most important message?” I see a mental image of an endless hiking trail winding its way through valleys and hills. I intuitively understand that the message is: The journey is the destination.

For the fourth most important message, I hear music and see a joyful couple twirling around a dance floor. The scene carries a dual meaning for me. I need to step out of my comfort zone, and I should perceive the process as a dance to be enjoyed.

Message number three presents me with a skull. The image unsettles me. But before I can dwell on it, the second most important message appears. It is once again intuitive, but this time in the form of a complete sentence: “You cannot change other people!”

This is a significant issue in my life. Although the message is not exactly comforting, it clearly shows me that something outside of my conscious thinking is taking place. I would never have willingly dredged up that sentence from the depths of my mind.

The most important message presents me with a clear exclamation mark and five letters, which I quickly jot down: "! RTSTU."

Following the exercise, I take time to absorb each individual message. The image of the skull increasingly troubles me, particularly as I'm confident that it was not a product of my imagination.

Symbols such as a skull often represent suppressed or hidden fears that inhibit our development," Karen explains during dinner. "When we're in a state of expanded awareness, these blocks often manifest themselves symbolically. We can then consciously release the fear without necessarily identifying the specific issue we're dealing with."

Seeing the expression on my face, Karen realizes that while I've heard her, I don't fully grasp what she's saying.

"Sometimes, you just have to trust the process," she advises before moving on to another participant.

Yet one mystery remains: the letter sequence "!RTSTU," the most significant of the five messages. I ponder its meaning.

Later in the evening, still clueless, I seek Phil's help. One look at my notes gives him the solution. He rearranges the letters on a blank page. "!RTSTU" transforms into "TRUST!

A warm shiver runs down my spine. The message couldn't be more fitting.

The *Gateway Voyage* program is very structured and intense. It leaves little time for a breather.

I feel just about reasonably sure that I can navigate Focus 12 when the trainers introduce Focus 15.

"F15—the state of No Time," Karen writes on the board.

She doesn't explain further. Instead, we're all asked to gather impressions and share them with the group after the exercise.

Transitioning from Focus 10 to Focus 12 is now relatively easy, and I relish the familiar vastness. But when Bob Monroe counts up from 12 and shortly after welcomes me in Focus 15, I find myself enveloped in complete

darkness.

Everything around me is black, and I feel like I'm in a barrel of thick black ink.

"Where am I?" I shout mentally.

My words disappear into the darkness. This state bears no resemblance to the lightness of Focus 12. It's neither pleasant nor unpleasant. It simply IS. Here in this space, I AM. Nothing more.

I am on the threshold between infinite calm and encroaching fear. It feels unfamiliar, yet familiar. Intuition tells me that I've been here before. But I can't recall when or why.

I focus on my breath to keep the rising fear at bay. From a distance, I hear the thumping of my heart, though I don't feel my body at all. The more I surrender to the silence, the safer I feel. Secure and supported. I am.

"OLIVER!" A sudden voice screams in my ear so loud that it physically hurts. I'm instantly on high alert. My heart races. I'm wide awake. The exercise ends abruptly for me.

Shaking, I reach for a pen and paper to record the experience.

Who shouted my name?

I wait patiently until Phil draws back the curtain of his CHEC Unit.

"Did you hear that too?" I ask him.

He shakes his head.

I'm stunned because, in my perception, the voice was so loud that Phil must have heard it clearly.

Neither John nor Karen has an explanation. However, Karen mentions that other participants have reported similar experiences in the past. While this doesn't provide a concrete answer, it does provide a bit of reassurance. At least I know I'm not losing my sanity.

Ann believes that my spirit guides might have contacted me and called out my name. I find the idea somewhat appealing but lack any proof. And why would they want to frighten me like that?

"Your spirit guides can't get through if you continue to doubt," says Ben from Kansas, suggesting that I accept any information received during meditation without judgment.

"You're receiving all these puzzle pieces so you can eventually assemble them. But that only works if you give each piece a chance. Otherwise, the

puzzle will never be complete."

Most of the other participants describe their experience of the intense darkness of Focus 15 similarly to mine. Only a few had distinct and detailed perceptions.

When I use the subsequent F15 exercises to explore the darkness in more detail, I soon discover that my thinking in this timeless space is significantly clearer than in my waking consciousness. Visualization becomes astonishingly easy. The images that flickered fleetingly and incoherently in my mind's eye in Focus 10 and Focus 12 solidify in Focus 15.

They are accompanied by thoughts I don't consciously generate. They simply emerge and line up like pearls on an invisible string. Each thought has its place, and I can effortlessly move back and forth between them without confusing or forgetting any of them. Had I possessed this ability as a child, school would have been much easier.

"The boy simply doesn't concentrate," the teachers said. "He's intelligent but lazy."

For the first time, at the age of 34, here at the Monroe Institute, I experience what it feels like to follow complex thought processes from start to finish.

The deeper I immerse myself in the darkness, the clearer the information I bring back into waking consciousness becomes. My fear of losing myself in the infinite expanse of F15 fades with each exercise.

All I must do is ask for an image, and it immediately materializes in my mind. Suddenly, I can visualize, a skill I find extremely challenging in my waking consciousness.

"Everything is possible – nothing is a must! The source of all potential is here in Focus 15."

I can't identify the origin of these words. They are just there. I don't hear them with my physical ears. And yet, I understand them clearly.

Despite the insights gained and the increasing clarity of my perceptions, doubts linger. I discuss this with John who thinks I need to trust the process even more.

"That's all well and good," I explain to him during a break, "but unless I get some tangible proof that my perceptions are real and not delusions, it doesn't really help."

During the concluding meditation in Focus 15, Robert Monroe instructs me to visualize a place on Earth that makes me feel especially good. I pick the island of Corsica where I lived for two years as a young man and of which I have wonderful memories.

Soon enough, I find myself standing barefoot on a beach, the pleasantly cool spray of the sea washing over my feet. I can even feel the wet sand.

Following Monroe's instructions, I imagine myself growing taller. I expand until I can easily see the ocean from an aerial perspective. Soon after, I notice the earth's curvature on the horizon. Fascinated, I turn around and gaze down at the island. I grow even taller. Now I can clearly see Sardinia, the Italian boot, and even the North African coast.

And still, I continue to grow. The earth beneath me rapidly shrinks until I'm floating through the universe, surrounded by absolute silence.

The planet is now at eye level, and I watch as the earth slowly rotates on its own axis.

When I intuitively reach out for the globe with my right hand, John, our trainer, appears out of nowhere on the opposite side. As fast as lightning, he grabs the planet with both hands and smiles at me.

"Here, Oliver, catch!" he shouts.

Before I can respond, the earth hurtles toward me, striking my forehead. The jolt makes my entire body tremble, and I'm instantly jolted back to waking consciousness.

It takes a few minutes for me to regain my composure. The experience felt more tangible than a lucid dream, so I carefully document every detail in my notebook. Not wanting to disturb Phil, I quietly sneak out of the room.

The fresh air outside feels grounding. Still, even minutes later, I can't shake off the sensation of hovering a few inches above the ground. On impulse, I lay down in the meadow next to the massive crystal in the institute's garden.

The earth is moist from the rain. My eyes trace the clouds slowly drifting across the sky above me.

"I was up there!" I whisper to myself.

"You're nuts," my mind retorts.

Could I possibly have experienced an OBE? How do you even define an Out-of-Body Experience? Who can answer my barrage of questions?

At this point, I understand it's not the trainers' responsibility to interpret

participants' experiences. Though I'm certain there's a valid reason for this, I'm yearning for someone's insights to help me make sense of my unexpected voyage into outer space.

By the time I return from my walk, lively discussions are already underway in the assembly room. John catches my eye and gestures to an empty seat near him.

As I settle into my cushion, Ann excitedly shares that she managed to stay awake this time. The group reacts with applause.

I feel genuinely happy for the elderly woman who has become my favorite among all the participants.

"It was incredibly beautiful," Ann chokes out between sobs, wiping away a few tears.

"I met my deceased son. He showed me his new home."

Everyone in the room is mesmerized by the 86-year-old's narrative.

"I've waited 20 years for this moment," she continues, her voice shaking. "Twenty long years… Knowing that Samuel is doing well means so much to me."

Ann pauses momentarily.

"My son took his own life. No one knows why. He didn't even leave a suicide note."

Deeply touched by Ann's story, I struggle to hold back my own tears.

Her account is followed by more equally striking stories. I don't share my own experience because it feels unspectacular compared to theirs.

There's no response when Karen asks if anyone else has anything to contribute before we move on to a new topic. I find myself lost in thought, staring blankly.

Why do everyone else's experiences seem so much more extraordinary than mine?

As I look up, John's voice sounds like it's coming from a great distance.

"Here, Oliver, catch!" he shouts, throwing a large ball of fabric my way. It unexpectedly hits my forehead.

A little dazed, I pick up the ball. I can hardly believe what I see: The ball has a world map printed on it and looks like a globe.

"That's… that's… exactly what I experienced in Focus 15!" I exclaim to the group. "I was in the universe, and you, John, threw the globe at me."

John doesn’t appear to be particularly impressed.

“You wanted proof,” he comments dryly, “didn’t you?”

I feel my head spin. I struggle to comprehend what happened. It simply doesn’t make sense. Did I have a clairvoyant premonition? Or does John possess some unsuspected paranormal abilities?

One thing is certain, something occurred that my rational mind cannot grasp. On one hand, it’s exciting; on the other, it unnerves me. I begin to realize that this program involves far more than what I initially imagined classic Out-of-Body Experiences to be like.

Although I’d love to stay in Focus 15 for the remaining two days, John and Karen have different plans for us. We’re about to visit Focus 21.

Robert Monroe describes this stage as the bridge between physical and non-physical energy systems—a threshold between physical reality and the levels outside time and space. At first, this doesn’t make much sense to me.

And it becomes even more abstract. Karen and John explain that there’s a café near the bridge. This café is a thought construct, created by the many thousands of *Gateway Voyage* participants who have met and exchanged their experiences there over the years.

According to John, “Among other things, the café serves as a launch point for shared excursions into non-physical realities. It’s kind of a base camp where you can agree to meet. And after the exercise, you can discuss your observations.”

Sounds exciting. But I’m unsure how to find this café. As if reading my mind, Karen explains the process.

“When you want to explore a certain place in a non-physical realm, you must program your inner GPS accordingly. You do this by setting a clear intention.”

So, I set my navigator to “café at the bridge” in Focus 21 and allow the sound frequencies to take me there. Monroe’s voice guides us through a color spectrum, the so-called Miranon colors.

Miranon is an entity that conveyed critical information about certain qualities of the non-physical to Bob Monroe through a human medium.

According to Miranon, each level between Focus 15 and 21 is associated with a certain color: blue (F15), red (F16), yellow (F17), rose (F18), green (F19), purple (F20) and white (F21).

Step by step, I delve into the colors that are supposed to transport me

from one Focus level to the next, and soon lose all sense of time in the process. I can't determine if I spend seconds or minutes on each level.

I have a hard time visualizing the first three colors. Only when I reach Focus 18 do I get a distinct impression of rose. The color envelops me like a dense fog.

"We will meet again here," a soft voice whispers out of nowhere.

Before I can respond, Monroe begins to count again. I find myself floating above a green cloud, then a purple one. This cloud seems bigger and wider than the others, its color is also far more intense.

Slowly, but surely, I drift through the purple until a bright white glow becomes visible in the distance, drawing me to it like a magnet.

Instead of seeing colors, I now sense and taste nothing but light. It's brighter and clearer than any light I've ever seen. It's dazzling, yet it doesn't blind me.

A wonderful sense of comfort washes over me. I am bathing in the light. At this moment, nothing else matters. I could stay here forever.

Very reluctantly, I follow Monroe's instruction to return to my familiar surroundings.

Upon finding myself back in waking consciousness, I realize that tears are streaming down my face. I can't move my physical body and I remain motionless in the CHEC Unit for a few minutes after the exercise.

As I walk towards the White Carpet Room, I can already hear the excited chatter of the other participants from the staircase.

"I met Maya at the café," Phil exclaims as I enter the room. "She looked at me and we crossed the bridge together."

I am astonished to hear that others had similar experiences. Many participants perceived each other and are enthusiastically sharing their observations.

But this time, I don't feel envious. Although I didn't make it to the café, my experience was still incredibly profound and will resonate for quite some time.

Suddenly, I remember the voice in Focus 18: "We will meet again here," it had said. I have no idea where it came from or who said it.

During another venture into Focus 21, I let myself drift without any sensation of my physical body, hoping for encounters. But it does not come

to that.

All I see is light, extending infinitely as far as my mind's eye can see. Linear time and the concept of space have no meaning here. Everything is unified. I am part of the light. The light is within me, surrounding me. I am light!

Initially, I manage to hold on to the energy of Focus 21. But then, some kind of tension builds up. My awareness stretches like a rubber band that threatens to snap at any moment.

When I get back to One, I hear Monroe's voice in the far distance.

"You will be wide awake, and all your senses will function perfectly. Five… Four…, Three…, Two…, One! One!"

The tension becomes unbearable. The bright light recedes. I rush through what feels like a tunnel, and an unpleasant jolting sensation pierces my physical body, which suddenly feels very alien to me.

I slowly open my eyes, lift my left hand, and examine it in the semi-darkness of the CHEC Unit. It appears as it always does. Yet, I can't shake the feeling that it doesn't belong to me.

It takes a few hours before I feel grounded again. My thoughts continually orbit around the light and the energy in Focus 21. I don't know why, but I yearn to return to this place that isn't really a place by definition and about which I essentially know nothing.

The week has passed all too quickly. But before we deal with mundane issues like travel arrangements, the trainers have a surprise for us.

"This is a small preview of what awaits you beyond Focus 21," John reveals, writing "Focus 27 – The Park" onto the wall chart with a black marker.

I'm already familiar with the Park from Monroe's detailed descriptions in the books I read before coming to Virginia.

It is the place or, more precisely, the level of consciousness that can be described as the afterlife in worldly terms.

I am simultaneously curious and cautious. Although the concept of the afterlife has intrigued me since childhood, the idea of willingly traveling there now seems absurd.

Besides, I'm still trying to assimilate what I experienced in Focus 21. Consequently, I only half-heartedly participate in the exercise without any

particular expectations.

As I head to my room, I try to recall Monroe's writings about Focus 27. He talked about a healing and rehabilitation center in the Park, a planning center, a library, and, naturally, a reception area where newcomers meet old friends and family members who have passed from physical life before them.

As with every exercise, I make myself as comfortable as possible in my CHEC Unit. After five days and nights in this confined wooden enclosure, I am longing for the spacious comfort of my bed back home.

The moment Monroe's voice reaches my ears through the headphones, along with the now familiar sense of physical heaviness, I am overcome by a mental fatigue that I cannot shake off. So, I simply fall asleep.

When I come to, I find myself in a French street café, sitting at a round outdoor table with a sugar bowl and a glass of water in front of me.

A little confused, I scan the strange surroundings. Nothing is familiar, apart from the ambiance reminiscent of my numerous trips to France. My lack of orientation leaves me feeling embarrassed. As hard as I try to remember how I got here, I draw a blank.

All the tables around me are occupied with people deeply engrossed in conversation. Yet no one seems to notice me.

I strain my ears to listen in on the conversation happening at the table beside me. However, I fail to recognize the language they are speaking. All I can perceive is a muffled and unintelligible sound, as if I were submerged underwater.

Only now do I realize that there are no people or vehicles on the street or the sidewalk in front of me.

Where can I possibly be?

I dare not leave my seat. Where would I go, anyway? I wonder if I've ordered anything and whether I've already paid. But no matter how hard I try, I do not remember. Panic begins to set in when a young man sits down at my table without being invited.

"My apologies for keeping you waiting," he unexpectedly and clearly says. "There's a lot happening today."

I stare at him and don't even dare to ask who he is or if we know each other.

"I'd love to show you the Park now," he continues and points to the right.

“They are expecting you.”

In an instant, my memory returns: Monroe Institute, CHEC Unit, Focus 27, the Park…

“Okay,” I respond, getting up from my chair, when I suddenly hear another voice.

“Express your gratitude to those who supported you on your journey to the Park, and say goodbye for now,” I hear through the headphones. “It’s time to return to waking consciousness.”

Startled and disappointed by the sudden end to this intriguing encounter, I open my eyes with a curse on my lips. Every time it gets interesting, Robert Monroe brings me back to physical reality! My first visit to the afterlife ends abruptly before it even truly began.

I’m amazed at how quickly my week at the institute passes. As we prepare to leave, the trainers advise us to be patient with ourselves in the days ahead.

“You may experience spontaneous emotional outbursts, and difficulty concentrating is also common,” Karen explains. “After all, your brain has been stimulated in an entirely new way over the course of this past week.”

John advises us to wait at least 30 days before making any life-changing decisions.

“Some participants feel a strong urge to radically overhaul their lives after this program, but it’s not advisable,” he cautions. “Allow the new experiences to sink in first. If the desire for change persists after a month, then you can take the necessary steps.”

The urgency I detect in John’s voice alarms me a little although I know he isn’t addressing me personally. But apparently there have been participants in the past who have spontaneously separated from their life partners, quit their jobs, or sold their homes after their *Gateway Voyage*.

At this point, I don’t anticipate my life taking such a drastic turn.

However, exactly 30 days after returning home, I make the decision to leave my job as a tour guide and TV journalist. I plan to move to Australia for a year and embark on yoga teacher training.

5 – IN SEARCH OF MY SPIRIT GUIDES

"The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."
Albert Einstein, Physicist

My year in Australia was challenging and often pushed me to my physical and emotional limits.

However, the breathtaking landscape in the northern region of New South Wales and the mentality of the Australians made it all worthwhile. Their refreshing outlook on life provided a much-needed break from the demanding yoga schedule.

The training itself was tough, as it exposed me to dogmas, rituals, and doctrines that conflicted with my personal beliefs.

To my surprise, the school in Byron Bay, where I pursued my teacher training, was not very receptive to alternative spiritual approaches. It strictly adhered to ancient traditions, and the only accepted truth was that which was dictated by the old masters.

It provided little opportunity to integrate the experiences I had gathered at the Monroe Institute. Most of my 29 fellow students showed little interest in conversations and discussions about Out-of-Body Experiences and perceptions. Their primary focus was on contorting their physical bodies according to the rules of Ashtanga yoga, often leading to injuries. I quickly realized that while yoga theoretically aims to dissolve the ego, the practice itself yielded something quite different.

A sense of competition emerged over the months, with everyone striving to be the best, to achieve the most extreme poses. It became an individualistic struggle, and I allowed myself to be drawn into it.

After the year of rigorous training, I suffered from intense back and joint

pains for several months.

Four hours of physical yoga practice per day, six days a week, took a toll on my body that couldn't be healed overnight. During this time, my body became my greatest adversary, especially because it could no longer meet the demands imposed by my ego.

Due to the demanding schedule, the use of Hemi-Sync fell by the wayside. The packed timetable, including theory modules on history, philosophy, and anatomy alongside asana practice, left little time for other interests. I would spend the few free hours we were granted walking on the beach, swimming in the ocean, or exploring the nearby rainforest. Sundays were often dedicated to rest, as my body would be screaming out for it.

Therefore, I was delighted to have the opportunity to spend an additional week at the Monroe Institute upon returning to the United States. I had maintained a close connection with Shaaron Honeycutt, and during my darkest moments, I confided in her and always found her support.

At this point, Shaaron had already completed all the institute's programs and recommended that I take the *Guidelines* program to enhance my intuition further and establish conscious interaction with my spirit guides.

A few days after landing in Los Angeles, I traveled to the East Coast without any specific expectations. I hadn't thoroughly reviewed the agenda for the upcoming week, which perhaps made it easier for me to fully engage with the process during my second week at the institute.

During that week, I did encounter quite a few stumbling blocks, but they no longer discouraged me. One of the challenges I had to face daily came in the form of Click Outs during the Hemi-Sync exercises.

Click Out is Monroe's jargon for a gap in awareness where any sense of time and memory is lost.

Over the years, experienced Monroe trainers have collected and shared their insights and perceptions of the phenomenon. According to these, a Click Out could have the following causes and meanings:

In a non-physical environment, our brain doesn't always find the reference points to translate certain experiences into a physical frame of reference. Neither verbal language nor symbols familiar to us are found there.

When a brain lacks the words or images to express the quality of an experience, it cannot provide a translation, resulting in a Click Out—a

distinct state different from sleep.

While those who sleep are generally aware that they have slept, experiencing a relative sense of time and lingering drowsiness upon waking, Click Outs lack these characteristics. They simply occur, and we recognize their significance.

Some trainers have reached the conclusion that a Click Out can also be caused by a substantial information download the brain cannot process in real time.

This information, which comes from our higher selves, is integrated into our consciousness gradually in a way that is meaningful to us based on our individual capacities, development, history, and culture.

I had the privilege of being trained by Karen Malik once again, with the assistance of Lee Stone, another experienced facilitator. I felt extremely well supported and guided by both throughout the program.

While many participants were able to quickly develop a stable bond with their spirit guides in the early stages of the workshop, my own process consisted of experiences that unfolded rather unexpectedly and did not initially seem to be related to the actual topic. Here is an excerpt from my *Guidelines* diary dated January 27, 2002:

I barely complete the preparatory process when I can clearly feel the now familiar vibration in my body. This time it seems even more intense than before. As if someone has connected me to an electric circuit.

However, unlike usual, the vibration shows no signs of diminishing.

As I glide from Focus 10 to Focus 12, it intensifies noticeably once again. Soon after, I struggle to hear Monroe's voice and can no longer follow his instructions.

My ears are suddenly filled with muffled sounds. They are so unpleasant and distracting that I consider taking the headphones off and ending the exercise.

Then follows a Click Out.

When I come to, I find myself in a desert. My first impulse: I am on a bus tour in the southwest of the United States. (Note: This is my brain's interpretation, based on my years of experience as a tour guide in this part of the country.)

When I look around and see no other people in my surroundings, I feel

uneasy and desperately try to remember where the bus is parked. But no matter where I look, all I see is sand.

Despite the glaring sun and flickering air before my eyes, I feel cold. Looking at my feet, I realize that I'm not wearing any shoes or socks. I carefully raise my right leg. It unexpectedly soars up, and the next moment I'm floating about nine feet above the desert sand.

Just thinking about my tour bus catapults me lightning-fast from the desert into urban surroundings, right into the middle of a busy boulevard. Totally disoriented, I try to escape from the traffic onto the sidewalk as unscathed as possible.

Just before reaching the curb, I get hit by a truck. To my own amazement, I find myself unhurt on the pavement. When I ask a pedestrian for help, he just walks through me.

Only now do I realize I am dead!

Strangely, this insight comforts me. Perhaps because it explains my ethereal state.

But how did I die? And where is my physical body?

Before I am even able to gather clear thoughts, I feel a strong pull and perceive a loud whooshing sound in my ears.

When I open my eyes, I'm back in my CHEC Unit, just as disorientated and confused as I was seconds earlier.

It took a few minutes before I fully regained consciousness and could think clearly. All indications suggested that I just had a spontaneous Out-of-Body Experience.

"Spontaneous and uncontrolled," Sarah, a psychologist from New York, commented. She had been familiar with OBEs since her early childhood, as they had become a refuge for her after enduring physical and mental abuse in an orphanage.

I came to appreciate Sarah's sober perspective on things. Unlike many of our fellow students, she never tried to shine with her experiences during the sharing circles.

According to Sarah, the classical OBEs, like the one I had experienced, were only a small part of a broad spectrum of extrasensory experiences.

She advised me that if these types of OBEs were to become more frequent in the future, I should learn how to control them, or else they might cease being enjoyable.

Sarah proved to be right. I had four more uncontrolled OBEs, which, in retrospect, were fascinating, but in the moment of experiencing them, they were rather uncomfortable.

I would have wished to perceive the separation from my physical body more consciously, allowing me to have at least some orientation during the experience.

However, the sequence remained the same: relaxation, vibration, Click Out, coming to in a strange location, and an abrupt return into my physical body.

While I was grateful for the Out-of-Body Experiences I had, they also hindered me from fully focusing on the objective of the *Guidelines* program —to meet my spirit guides.

Despite my efforts, I didn't receive clear perceptions of these supposed allies. There were no introductions, visual impressions, or names.

Looking back at my diary entries and audio recordings, I now realize that I did gain significant impressions. I had discounted them due to their perceived vagueness or lack of alignment with my expectations.

Breaking through the barrier between the non-physical and physical levels is not easy for our spirit guides. And even when they succeed, our ego is always ready to dismiss any signs.

Doubt often outweighs trust. However, a fruitful relationship between the physical and spirit world can only be built through the path of trust. First and foremost, it is essential to learn to give as little space as possible to the ego and to follow one's own intuition.

The Monroe Institute's *Guidelines* program offers valuable methods to strengthen the connection to the spirit world. Success or failure clearly depends on how quickly the individual can let go of old patterns.

I gave my inner doubter too much room for too long, accompanied by a lack of self-confidence that took a while to overcome.

Recognizing and accepting spirit guidance remains a lifelong process for me. Like any interpersonal relationship, we must listen to each other to make progress as a team. I intentionally use the term "team" because that's how I perceive my spirit guides—as a group or collective of individuals or entities working together for the common good.

The path to gaining this insight and establishing solid communication

with my team was rather tumultuous, and I take full responsibility for that.

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As part of the *Guidelines* program each participant gets to experience a session called Personal Resource Exploration Program (PREP). During this session, each participant spends approximately an hour in a soundproof chamber equipped with a waterbed at Monroe's research lab.

An experienced technician monitors the session and transmits individually adjusted sound frequencies through headphones.

The soundproof chamber is equipped with a microphone that allows live communication of the experience. Additionally, the participant wears sensors to measure and record vital signs such as body temperature, pulse rate, and brainwaves.

Participants are provided with audio recordings and a printout of the data as a memento.

In cases where there are many participants, the PREP sessions are spread out over the week, with the order determined by a random draw.

The prospect of the PREP session was both exciting and anxiety-inducing for me. I felt a certain pressure to succeed and was stressed by the knowledge that a technician would monitor my every movement.

When my name was one of the first to be drawn from the lottery drum, I wanted to run away. However, I understood the importance of this experience and was determined to face the challenge.

When the first two participants of the group shared their successful experiences the next day, my confidence was completely shaken. I would have preferred to postpone the session by one, or even better, two days, but the trainers believed it was important to honor the sequence.

"That's also a part of your spiritual guidance," Karen explained. "There must be a reason why you are number 3 and not number 22."

My old friend, doubt, protested silently. However, I had no choice but to comply with the rules. I was called to the lab in the late afternoon of the second day, right after my first Out-of-Body Experience.

Skip Atwater, who would monitor and guide my session, fitted me with the electrodes and sensors.

In 2000, Skip served as the institute's Director of Research. He had met Monroe in 1977 through his work with a secret U.S. Army unit, and they

soon became friends.

I had already read extensively about Skip, as he had been the head of Project Stargate, the military's secret Remote Viewing unit during the Cold War and was well known in relevant circles.

Contrary to my expectations of someone of his position, Skip turned out to be an extremely sensitive and kind-hearted man. He not only noticed my nervousness but also knew how to alleviate it.

The pleasant temperature of the waterbed already suggested a sense of weightlessness even in a waking state of consciousness.

"I will now close the door and switch off the light," Skip informed me. "Should you start feeling unwell, you can use the microphone to let me know."

My heart raced as the door locked. Of course, Skip Atwater could observe this on his monitor.

"Take your time and relax, Oliver," I heard his sonorous voice through the headphones. "It may help if you start with the preparatory process. I give you a few minutes before I bring in the first set of frequencies.

I recalled a calming breathing technique I had learned in my yoga studies.

"From this point onward, everything you say will be recorded," Skip explained, "and I will intervene if I don't hear anything from you for a while or if it seems like you've fallen asleep."

It took a few minutes until I found my inner peace and was able to silence the continuous flow of thoughts in my head.

"I'll now guide you to Focus 10 and then on to Focus 12."

Shortly after, I could already feel the effects of the frequencies. First, the weightiness of Focus 10, followed by the boundless expanse of Focus 12.

Mentally, I reached out to my spirit guides for support, although I had no idea who they were at that point.

After a considerable amount of time passed without me saying anything, Skip kindly asked me to describe my perceptions. However, apart from some colorful light flashes and glimpses of unfamiliar faces, nothing remarkable occurred.

"You might want to direct a question to your spirit guides," Skip suggested. "My monitor clearly shows that you are stable in Focus 12. It's a good prerequisite for communicating with them."

To this day, I cannot adequately explain what happened next. The audio tape later revealed that I started talking, but I had no conscious recollection of what I said.

It was only when Skip shifted the sound frequencies into the Beta range to bring me back to waking consciousness that my self-awareness became more pronounced again. I vividly remember the moment when the lights came on inside the chamber, and Skip released me from the electrodes and sensors.

“Take as much time as you need and join me when you’re ready. I’ve got some water here for you.”

It took a few minutes before I managed to lift my sluggish body from the large waterbed. I felt like a seal struggling against the current, trying to crawl to shore.

Dazed and unsteady on my feet, I exited the chamber.

“That was pretty wild,” Skip chuckled and pointed at his monitor. “Check it out.”

While Skip printed out the data from our session, he explained the different graphs.

“It’s interesting that you initially spoke in English in Focus 12. Once I sensed that you were traveling steadily and having encounters, I brought you up to Focus 21. There, you suddenly started speaking in German. Unfortunately, I could no longer guide you because I don’t understand the language.”

His statement took me by surprise. At that moment, I wasn’t even aware that I had spoken during the session.

“You can listen to the recordings later.” Skip handed me an audiotape and a lengthy printout of the measured data.

I had neither the time nor the desire to listen to the tape at the institute using an ancient Walkman. Instead, I stowed it away in my suitcase with the intention to thoroughly analyze it at home.

However, one thought kept circling through my mind: I had no conscious memory of what had happened during the session. On the other hand, Skip had heard my voice. This raised the question for me of whether I might be constantly experiencing events on different levels of consciousness that my brain is unable to transport into my waking mind.

Over the years, I have continued to ask myself this crucial question. The definitive answer is: Yes!

Perceptions in states of expanded awareness are akin to our nocturnal dreams. Often, we know that we have dreamt but cannot recall the exact details of the dreams.

Therefore, after the *Guidelines* program, I began verbally describing my perceptions into a recorder while I was doing the exercises.

The following days proved to be very meaningful for me. Karen and Lee had done an exceptional job of directing me onto a promising path that left little room for doubt.

I learned to accept that I had spirit guides who didn't want to tell me their names or show themselves to me. Instead of constantly searching for personified entities displaying physical characteristics, I began to put more effort into sensing their presence intuitively.

By the end of the week, I felt I had made a significant breakthrough. With my intensive Hemi-Sync training, I could now transition from waking consciousness to Focus 12, the state of expanded awareness, within seconds. This opened the door to heightened intuitive perception and communication with my spirit team.

Focus 12 not only allowed me to perceive my own guides but also enabled me to observe other non-physical beings and phenomena that would have otherwise remained hidden.

Who or what are these so-called spirit guides?

Much like Robert Monroe, I believe that everyone should embark on their own search for answers. As a teacher and trainer, it is not my role to dictate what people should do. Instead, I strive to create a safe space where individuals can have their own experiences and share them if they choose to do so. I also share my own experiences for inspiration without claiming to possess universal truths.

Personally, I have come to the conclusion that my team is part of a consortium that made an agreement before my incarnation into this physical life. This agreement, sometimes called a soul contract, governs the tasks of all team members, including my own.

I see myself as an equal member of a collective with no definitive hierarchy. Instead, each link in this chain carries specific responsibilities.

On the physical level, I seek the assistance of a mechanic when my car breaks down, consult an accountant for financial advice, and rely on medical or alternative practitioners for my physical well-being.

Similarly, on the non-physical level, I have experts who are familiar with my life plan and help me to manifest it for the greater good of all.

Over time, I have come to accept that nobody within my team emphasizes their individuality. No one seeks the spotlight or takes center stage. We function as a unified whole, working together towards our common goals. This understanding has led me to believe that my guides do not introduce themselves individually or adopt earthly names. Instead, they prefer to be addressed and acknowledged as a collective entity.

Through patient inquiry and attentive listening for answers, I have learned a great deal about my team. This includes significant evidence of shared incarnations.

In 2018, during an OBE workshop, I spontaneously asked these entities why they chose to be my guides in this life. The following excerpt is taken from my journal:

I have barely posed the question when I feel a powerful tug at the soles of my feet. The ground beneath me starts to vibrate, and I soar upwards.

In a split second, I catch a breathtaking bird's-eye view of the seminar room and the participants inside lying flat on their mats.

The next moment I find myself in the middle of an old ruin of what seemed to have been a monastery or abbey of some sort. Surprisingly, my perception is vividly visual.

I am standing in a circle alongside a group of Franciscan monks, all dressed in their distinctive dark brown cowls. Strangely, none of the monks have heads, although some have pulled up their hoods.

I try to absorb every detail: the weathered and partially ruined walls, the tall grass, the clear blue sky. The scent of grass and flowers fills the air. I intuitively know that we are a tight-knit religious community.

"We are brothers," it echoes through my head.

Those words come from the monks. I am part of an order and have been chosen to complete a quest.

"Why me?" I inquire.

"Because you have the skill to do it," comes the collective response.

The number 1786 enters my thoughts. I understand that it signifies the

year 1786.

"What is the quest that you want me to complete?"

"You know what you have to do."

"Yes," I respond mentally. "I know what I need to do."

The circle disperses, and one by one, the monks vanish without a trace from my field of perception until I am left alone amidst the ruins.

I take a moment to carefully observe my surroundings. I realize that I am familiar with this place: the distinctive Mediterranean tree and the sturdy walls. Everything feels intimately known.

"We are brothers," the voice echoes once more.

Then the scene fades away, replaced by a roaring sound in my physical ears. Within seconds, I become aware of my physical body lying on the mattress. The room remains quiet.

I hardly dare to breathe as I recall the scene again before I grab a pen and paper to record my experience.

"I know what I need to do."

I utter these words with absolute certainty, as though I truly understand what transpired in that location. Yet, I have no conscious access to the information.

As I turn to my side, I notice tears streaming down my cheeks.

It wasn't until several days later, once I had regained emotional composure following the intense experience, that I sat down at my desk and began my research.

Within minutes, I stumbled upon two significant locations: the Couvent d'Orezza on the island of Corsica and the old Spanish Mission in Santa Barbara, California.

The ruins of the monastery in Corsica aligned with about 90 percent of my visual impressions. During my meditation, I had distinctly perceived its tall bell tower. Furthermore, I had felt a strong attraction to Corsica from a young age and had lived on the island for a couple of years in my early twenties.

However, back then, I had no knowledge of these specific ruins. I had never ventured that far inland, and as a 22-year-old, exploring monastic ruins had not been one of my primary interests.

On the other hand, I instantly felt a connection to the mission in Santa Barbara, where I had frequently guided groups of German tourists. On each

visit, I felt a pull towards a particular area of the garden that closely resembled the surroundings in my vision.

My heart skipped a beat when I discovered that the mission was founded by Spanish priests, led by Father Fermín Lasuén, in 1786. He succeeded Father Junipero Serra, who had constructed several missions in California under the direction of the Spanish Crown and had passed away in 1784.

Another intriguing detail caught my attention. I had spent the winter months of 2008 and 2009 on the Spanish island of Mallorca, where my accommodations were situated on Avenida California, at the intersection of Avenida Junipero Serra. Coincidence?

Although these events occurred some time ago, I now also consider the possibility that my visual perceptions may have been metaphoric or inaccurately interpreted by my brain.

Nevertheless, the core message remains unchanged: There is a task to be solved or a topic to be dealt with, of which I do not even have a vague idea to this day.

It was truly remarkable to have such a vivid visual perception of the collective consciousness that comprises at least a portion of my spirit team.

However, my guides seldom reveal themselves in distinct forms or as defined beings, such as the faceless monks I encountered. Whenever such visions do occur, they are always accompanied by a sense of urgency.

Each of us has a team with whom we can consciously connect when we open ourselves to it. I experience daily how enriching this connection can be, even though in my case, it mostly exists on an intuitive level.

For most individuals, having a name, a form, or at least a symbol for their spirit guides is important. I have encountered many who seem to have a clear understanding of who their guides are and what they are called.

In the early stages of my exploration of consciousness, I used to envy them. However, I have since come to terms with how I perceive my team. In fact, I am grateful because not knowing their specific identities has allowed me to develop trust in the unseen.

When I visited Arthur Findlay College in England in 2019 to attend a course on trance mediumship, I received a wonderful confirmation of this trust.

My teacher, trance medium and artist Lynn Cottrell, creates impressive

portraits of individual spirit guides, as well as entire teams, among other works.

Participants at the college get the opportunity to book private sessions with their teacher during break times.

I got to know Lynn as a fascinating medium, and I felt privileged to have the chance to learn from and be inspired by her. The messages Lynn transmitted from the spirit world felt authentic and incredibly accurate. Never mind her fun and uplifting attitude.

Since working in a trance state was a new experience for me, I asked Lynn for a one-on-one session. I hoped to gain more clarity about my personal development at that time.

Lynn explains her process as follows: She connects with the spirit guides of her counterpart and receives information about the abilities that would be beneficial to develop further. At the same time, she channels the energy of the spirit guides into a highly detailed drawing. The portraits that Lynn creates with pastel chalk at an incomprehensible speed are incredibly expressive, beautiful, and deeply moving.

As I made my way to our session, I felt a mixture of excitement and apprehension about the drawing Lynn would create for me. I had been connecting with my guides without relying on visual cues, and now Lynn would suddenly bring them to life on paper.

I saw our session as perhaps my only chance to see them visually, but a part of me was hesitant. Did my team truly want to be represented in that way?

Despite my reservations, I decided to go with the flow and let events unfold naturally.

Lynn was already waiting for me with a large sketch pad and her pastels. She explained that she would first transmit information from my guides for the initial ten minutes or so before commencing the drawing.

Anxiously, I sat across from my teacher, observing as she entered a light trance. Within seconds, she began to speak, pouring forth a wealth of information at a speed I had never witnessed before. After a few minutes, she abruptly stopped and looked at me with wide-open eyes.

“By the way, I won’t draw anything for you,” Lynn unexpectedly declared.

She seemed taken aback by her own words.

“Your team says it’s not necessary. You don’t need a picture.”

Most people might have been disappointed by this news, but I couldn’t have been happier. The message that I didn’t need a picture was the most profound confirmation I could receive.

Lynn used the remaining 20 minutes to transmit even more information, and I eagerly absorbed every word, knowing that she was undeniably connected to my team.

For instance, Lynn described intricate details about my ability to work across different levels of consciousness and offered helpful suggestions on how to enhance my processes.

These small yet significant moments of verifiable experiences provide us with confirmation and renewed motivation. Secretly, we all yearn for proof, and I firmly believe that everyone will receive it once they are ready to trust.

In 2012, ten years after my PREP Session at the Monroe Institute's laboratory, I came across the long-forgotten audio tape again while moving into my new apartment.

In the end, I hadn’t listened to the recording after returning from the *Guidelines* program. Back then, I couldn’t find a Walkman, never mind a cassette tape deck. It was the digital age and CD players had long replaced the old recorders.

Consequently, the envelope containing the audio tape had been stored away with a box of old letters.

This time, I made a point of acquiring a cassette player and eagerly listened to my own voice. I was deeply moved by the words I had spoken, despite having no recollection of them. Among other things, I vividly described how I would transition from being a tour guide, leading groups to earthly sites, to guiding them to the astral plane.

One particular sentence from the recording has stayed with me to this day:

“We can show you the path, but only you can clear the way by following your true calling.”

6 – THE JOURNEY INWARDS

“What was said to the rose that made it open
was said to me here in my chest.”
Jalal al-Din Rumi, Persian Sufi Mystic

Two years passed after my *Guidelines* program in 2002 before I made my return to the Monroe Institute a third time.

Guidelines had sparked a profound period of transformation and integration for me. Back then, I could clearly feel how much the work with the Monroe Method and my time in Australia had shaped me anew.

Following my return from Virginia, I no longer felt at ease in the bustling city of Los Angeles. I yearned for a more serene environment where I could try my hand at teaching yoga. Therefore, when an unexpected job offer came my way in the alpine village of Verbier, located in French-speaking Switzerland, I eagerly accepted.

The summer spent amidst the mountains proved to be incredibly nourishing for me. I taught yoga sessions in the early mornings and late afternoons, leaving plenty of time to delve into consciousness research and further practice Out-of-Body Experiences.

I stayed in a cozy 270-square-foot cabin nestled among towering conifers situated near the village center. It was the ideal abode for relaxation and meditation. In this humble dwelling, I deliberately opted for a life devoid of television or internet access, relying instead on the handful of books I had brought with me from the United States. These books were cherished OBE classics, providing me with ample entertainment and knowledge during my tranquil stay.

But the more I read, the less progress I made in practical terms. My mind became overwhelmed with numerous explanations, different approaches, and instructions from renowned OBE masters like William

Buhlman, Robert Bruce, and Jurgen Ziewe.

Reflecting on it now, I realize that my intensive studies were actually counterproductive. Instead of finding my own path, I was merely emulating the experiences of others.

I longed to experience what Monroe and his peers had gone through —in the exact same manner. I held a clear and specific notion of how an OBE should manifest, and I was determined to pursue it without any hindrance. Realistically, who could have possibly stopped me? After all, there was nobody in the vicinity with whom I could have engaged in discussions about this matter.

Consequently, I diligently practiced every single day using various Hemi-Sync recordings, constantly yearning for that one significant OBE.

By late summer, consistent training had brought me to the point where I could successfully leave my physical body, or at least that was my perception. Through mental anchoring, I could now reach and remain in Focus 10 within a matter of minutes, even without relying on Hemi-Sync.

During my practice, I would visualize my energy body moving from right to left in a rocking motion. This visualization was sometimes accompanied by vibrations or a loud swooshing sound in both ears. On average, every third attempt yielded the desired outcome.

However, there were instances when I would sink through the mattress beneath the bed and find myself unable to move in any direction.

Additionally, after vigorous rocking, I occasionally fell sideways out of bed, bouncing uncontrollably like a rubber ball.

Unfortunately, my OBEs were short-lived, lasting only seconds before the gravitational pull of my physical body drew me back like a magnet. I would regain consciousness, breathing heavily, often accompanied by a powerful jerk or muscle twitching.

There were also occasions when I consciously perceived leaving my physical body. But those instances were immediately followed by a Click Out.

On certain days, I would click out even during the relaxation phase, and I would only regain consciousness once I was already outside of my physical body, often finding myself in strange and unfamiliar locations. I

frequently felt uncertain whether these experiences were lucid dreams or actual Out-of-Body Experiences.

As my OBEs became more frequent, my life began to mirror the chaos within them.

In the early days of fall, my role as a yoga teacher in Verbier ended, disrupting my daily routine.

Over the following months, my meditation practice dwindled as I prioritized other activities, traveling through Europe and reconnecting with old friends. My pursuit of the perfect Out-of-Body Experience temporarily took a back seat.

Interestingly enough, I experienced several spontaneous OBEs without any preconceived intention. These astral travels consistently occurred in the early hours of the morning. They shared a common trait: I never recalled the moment of leaving my physical body, only regaining consciousness in realms beyond the physical reality.

Here is an excerpt from my journal dated February 2003:

An icy draft blows across my face, causing me to instinctively reach for the blanket to cover my ears. However, my hands grasp at nothing. I feel disoriented, and panic sets in.

Around me, I perceive fog-like swirls that generate a chilling wind. I attempt to shield myself by covering my face with my hands. But I have no hands—and no body either.

Before I can comprehend my peculiar state, I am seized by a vortex that propels me into a tunnel, spiraling on its axis.

Moments later, I shoot out of the structure at breakneck speed like a cannonball and fly towards a housing settlement. Guided by an unseen force, my journey concludes right in front of a garden gate.

I immediately recognize the house beyond the gate. It holds precious memories from my childhood. The house belongs to my Uncle Heini and Auntie Anna. Auntie Anna was my grandmother's closest friend. Both passed away long ago.

Flooded with memories, I cautiously traverse the small front yard and approach the door.

Click Out.

Now, I find myself on the house's second floor, specifically in Auntie

Anna's kitchen. Right in front of me sits a bucket filled with LEGO bricks. Auntie Anna is seated at the table, and upon noticing me, she claps her hands and smiles. When I shift my gaze, I see my grandmother.

"How wonderful of you to visit us," her words resonate clearly.

Grandma takes hold of my hands. I realize that I suddenly do have hands again.

"My boy..." she says, and tears well up in my eyes. "I'm living here with Auntie Anna now. I'm staying on the first floor."

Slightly bewildered, I contemplate why my grandmother doesn't reside in her own house.

"We get along wonderfully," she explains. "How lovely of you to visit us," she repeats, enveloping me in a warm embrace.

"Where is Grandpa? And why are you not with him?" I ask.

"Oh, don't you worry, my boy," she comforts me and goes on to explain that Grandpa is residing on a different vibratory level.

Grandma can sense my confusion.

"He does come to visit, though" she says softly and with a smile on her face.

Before I can ask another question, I feel a pull.

"It is time," an unfamiliar voice whispers.

Reluctantly, I disengage from my grandmother's embrace. She waves at me.

"Everything is all right," she reassures. "Auntie Anna and I are doing well."

As the force of the pull intensifies, my perception begins to blur. Suddenly, darkness engulfs me, a deep and profound darkness. I feel overwhelmed by emotions. With a powerful jolt, I regain awareness of my physical body.

When I open my eyes, I find myself lying in bed, unable to move. It takes several minutes before I regain my composure and think clearly again.

During that time, I lacked the ability to categorize the experience. However, now I understand that what occurred was a visit to *The Park* in Focus 27.

Little did I anticipate that in the years to come, I would develop a strong affinity for that realm and return to it frequently to reunite with friends and relatives or to explore its wonders.

Towards the end of 2003, I felt a strong desire to delve back into the realm of OBEs with renewed vigor. It was time to revisit the Monroe Institute again and seek fresh inspiration.

Shaaron Honeycutt suggested that I take the *Heartline* program, and without much hesitation, I followed her advice. Trusting Shaaron's expertise as a fellow yoga teacher and knowledgeable individual on all things Monroe, I believed this choice would propel my progress.

Thus, in the spring of 2004, I found myself once again journeying to Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains. Shaaron and her husband, A.J., graciously invited me to stay at their home near the institute for a few days before the program officially commenced. This opportunity allowed me to delve deeper into the history of the Monroe family, immersing myself in their fascinating legacy.

A.J., the only boy in a blended family of six children, shared a special bond with his stepfather.

When A.J.'s mother, Nancy Penn Honeycutt, passed of cancer in 1992, Robert Monroe was deeply affected. The loss shattered his world, prompting him to retreat from public life and minimize his involvement at the institute.

As Bob's health deteriorated and he became incapable of caring for himself, A.J. and Shaaron made the decision to move back into the family villa. They took on the responsibility of looking after Bob until his passing in 1995.

Over long walks and evenings spent in front of the fire with me, A.J. recounted the institute's beginnings and shared stories about the diverse and fascinating individuals who had visited over the decades. Among them was Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the renowned pioneer in near-death studies. Bob had invited her to his laboratory, where she experienced her first conscious OBE under his guidance. Monroe and Kübler-Ross maintained a close friendship until his death.

In collaboration with the psychologist and parapsychologist Charles Tart, Monroe and Kübler-Ross created the Hemi-Sync series titled *Going Home*. This set of guided meditations was designed to facilitate a smooth transition for the dying and bring comfort to their loved ones and companions.

For A.J. Honeycutt, Out-of-Body Experiences were something normal even as a child. While his peers played in the fields and meadows, A.J. went to the lab with his stepfather and developed an interest in his research at a

young age.

His sisters were also deeply involved in Monroe's work. Each family member contributed to the institute's development and the production of sound recordings in some capacity.

My in-depth conversations with A.J. about OBEs and other paranormal phenomena motivated me to resume my practice more seriously. It was my deepest desire to be able to leave my body at will and explore unknown dimensions. I eagerly anticipated how the *Heartline* program would facilitate this.

Penny Holmes, A.J.'s sister, developed the program shortly after Bob's passing and has been training it ever since.

Shaaron and A.J. preferred not to disclose any details before the program began, ensuring that I didn't build up unrealistic expectations and spoil the element of surprise. I was eager for new experiences and curious about what lay ahead.

To my surprise, on the first day of the program, A.J. drove past the Nancy Penn Center and took me to the family's villa, known as Robert's Mountain Retreat.

After Monroe's death, the impressive house had been transformed into a secondary retreat center. The lounge serves as a meeting room, and the family's former sleeping quarters are now equipped with CHEC Units instead of regular beds.

"Apart from that, not much has actually changed," A.J. remarked as he gave me a tour of the house. "The kitchen, the TV room, the pool—everything is just as it was when my parents were still alive."

The unchanged original decor exudes distinctive Southern charm. The walls boast a peach-colored hue, and floor-length drapes with floral patterns adorn the windows. Magnificent chandeliers hang from the ceilings, adding to the ambiance. The property is incredibly spacious, with the dining room comfortably accommodating 20 individuals.

A.J. spread his arms wide, saying, "Mom and Dad always emphasized the importance of having a large house. They loved welcoming and entertaining guests."

I was thrilled to spend the week in this historically rich place. A.J. had graciously arranged for me to stay in the most exquisite room of the old villa all by myself.

The opening meditation of the workshop had the sole purpose of providing relaxation and allowing the 18 participants to reacquaint themselves with Focus 10.

However, I craved more, and I wanted it immediately. I had arrived with a firm intention to refine my OBE skills. I verbalized this intention as an affirmation, stating it clearly before the first exercise.

I was wholly committed to adhering to my strict agenda.

And thus, I was bound to fail. That evening, I wasn't even able to enter the "mind awake, body asleep" state. I remained wide awake and tense, to the point where my muscles began to ache after only a few minutes. A cramp in my right calf was the final straw. I removed the headphones and abruptly halted the exercise.

Feeling disappointed and annoyed by my profound failure, I grounded myself in my CHEC Unit for the remainder of the evening. Perhaps I simply needed to settle down, acclimate to the new surroundings, and get a restful night's sleep.

Tomorrow is a new beginning.

By late evening, the muscle pain had subsided, and I had managed a solid six hours of sleep. I woke up in the morning feeling rested and full of drive.

After breakfast, Penny and her co-trainer John Kortum, outlined the plan for the rest of the week. As implied by the name *Heartline*, the program primarily centers around heart energy.

I was somewhat skeptical of the concept, and when Penny started discussing self-love and self-acceptance, I considered packing up and heading home.

What on earth am I doing here?

It seemed that I may have breezed through the program description a bit too quickly before signing up. I certainly hadn't noticed the terms self-love and self-acceptance. Why on earth had Shaaron recommended this course?

Somewhat frustrated and miffed at the thought of spending my money on a self-help program, I went back to my room. As I climbed the stairs, I had an idea. I could simply place the heart energy issue on hold and remain true to my own objectives.

I settled comfortably in my CHEC Unit, eager to leave my body and begin an exhilarating journey.

I had barely finished the preparatory process and mentally phrased my affirmation when my physical body began to cramp in several areas. At first, I thought this was an intense version of the familiar vibrations heralding an upcoming OBE.

My joyful anticipation quickly faded when my muscles' spasmodic movements intensified and caused significant discomfort.

In a panic, I removed the headphones and massaged my arms and legs. Suddenly, everything hurt.

What the heck is going on with me?

It seemed pointless to continue the exercise in my current state, so I rolled out my yoga mat next to the CHEC Unit to gently stretch my aching muscles. It worked. Just a few minutes later, the tension in my body began to ease.

However, the pain came back soon after I returned to the CHEC Unit.

The morning devolved into psychological and physical torment, and I couldn't focus on the meditations. Even a long walk through the woods during the lunch break didn't help. My mood worsened with each passing hour.

I was hesitant to burden the trainers with my issue. If I, as a certified yoga instructor, couldn't determine the root of my problem, how could Penny or John possibly be of help?

So, I set a deadline for myself: If I didn't feel better by the morning, I would withdraw from the program.

I spent a restless night tossing and turning on the mattress, unable to find sleep. By the early hours of the morning, the pain had become so severe that I couldn't remain lying down. I rose and packed my belongings. In a state of desperation, I knocked on Penny's door before breakfast.

"I can't continue," I confessed, tears welling up in my eyes. "I need to go home."

Penny urged me to remain calm.

"Go back to your room, Oliver. I'll be there in a minute."

Soon after, she arrived at my door carrying two cups of tea.

"Let's figure this out," Penny declared, gesturing towards the CHEC Unit. "Why don't you lie down and tell me when the pain began."

She drew up a chair and sat next to me.

"It started during the first exercise in the evening, the day before

yesterday," I relayed in a shaky voice, providing details about the recurring discomfort. Penny listened intently.

"What are you hoping to gain from this program?" she asked. "Why did you come here?"

I felt caught out.

"I... I'm not sure," I stuttered.

I didn't want to bring up Shaaron and A.J. since they were related to Penny. And nobody had coerced me into enrolling in the course. The decision had been entirely mine.

"I don't think this program is a good fit for me," I admitted cautiously. "I didn't realize it wouldn't include OBEs, and I was hoping to improve those skills."

Penny nodded understandingly.

"I think I know what the problem is. And it's completely fine if you decide not to continue with the *Heartline* program. You are an adult, after all. "

She took a deep breath.

"Your body seems to be reacting to your intention of wanting to leave it. Whatever that may imply. But your body doesn't appear to be in resonance with your intent."

Penny suggested I reflect on the idea that each body cell is imbued with consciousness and that separating the body's consciousness and the soul's consciousness isn't necessarily in the body's best interest. After all, the body's duty is to host the soul aspect and its consciousness during our lifetime.

"Your body has a role," she stated.

I'd never considered that. But her words struck a chord.

"And it wants to fulfill that role, regardless of anything else," I added.

"Perhaps you could try communicating with your body," Penny suggested, "and invite your body's consciousness into a mental dialogue. You could ask it to journey with you rather than attempting to separate." She paused for a moment. "I'm not suggesting that this will solve your problem. But it's worth a shot, don't you think?"

Penny's approach resonated with me, and I appreciated her suggestion to communicate with my body. I probably should have considered this much earlier. Why hadn't I, a yoga instructor, thought of it myself?

After giving me a comforting hug, Penny left. I decided to follow her advice. Nonetheless, I left my packed bag at the door, just in case.

After breakfast, the trainers introduced the first Hemi-Sync exercise of the day. My muscles ached as much as before, and it was a struggle to climb into the CHEC Unit.

I donned the headphones, closed my eyes, and tuned in to my body. I could distinctly feel its resistance. But how, I wondered, does one communicate with one's body?

I envisioned each cell being infused with consciousness and performing its role as part of a larger collective.

An overwhelming sense of gratitude washed over me. Then, quite spontaneously, I questioned why I wanted to leave my body.

This body carries my mind and a portion of my soul through a world entirely inaccessible without it.

"I want to discover what it means to be a multidimensional being," I whispered into the darkness of the CHEC Unit. "I have a profound need to understand who I am, where I came from, and where I am going."

Then, I mentally invited my body's consciousness to join me in these explorations.

Another surge of profound gratitude coursed through me. And when Penny introduced the upcoming exercise with a beautiful poem by Rumi, tears welled up in my eyes. A torrent of emotions rose from deep within me.

I wept until a sense of tranquility enveloped me. A beautiful, healing tranquility. And for the first time in my life, I felt complete.

The pain began to recede from my body. It wasn't entirely gone by the time the exercise was over, but I intuitively knew that it was only a matter of hours or days before my body-mind system would regain its balance.

Despite diminishing pain, *Heartline* still represented a huge challenge for me. But after my cathartic emotional release, I understood there was a reason for my participation in the program.

It was new territory for me to confront and share my emotions with others. It wasn't easy, but I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity.

I began to grasp the importance of self-love and cultivating a healthy sense of self-worth. Unconditional love and acceptance of oneself are not only vital to successful interpersonal relationships. Self-love also enables us

to resonate with what exists beyond physical reality because the fundamental substance of “all that is” vibrates at the frequency of unconditional love.

Heartline offered me a safe space to release emotional baggage and recalibrate as a person. I learned more about myself that week than I had in the previous 38 years of my life.

Inspired by Penny, I cultivated a new relationship with my body and gained a fresh perspective on OBEs.

I was now deeply motivated to stop attempting to replicate others’ experiences and, instead, to uncover my own truth. Just as Robert Monroe had done.

This was the beginning of a new era for me.

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After my stay at the Monroe Institute, I felt the urge to travel to Europe. My intention for the following months was to delve deeper into the anatomy and energetic structures of the physical body.

What I experienced, thanks to Penny’s advice, felt like a true miracle to me. My body had responded noticeably to the intentional signals my mind had sent. To me, this was a clear indication that there must indeed be a cellular consciousness with the ability to communicate.

During my initial research, I stumbled upon the work of Dr. Bruce Lipton, an American developmental biologist noted for his views on epigenetics. Lipton formulated the theory that gene expression can be swayed not only by environmental factors but also by individuals’ attitudes and thoughts.

I avidly followed Lipton’s work, struck by the fact that he wasn’t some fringe theorist but a respected scientist blending Western medicine with revolutionary thinking. Here was a man capable of articulating how body cells react to each person’s internal dialogue in a way that’s easy to comprehend.

Lipton’s writings helped me understand what must have happened during my numerous attempts to separate body and mind within my own system.

2004 was a year of further transformations for me. After attending a lecture about Dr. John Veltheim’s BodyTalk-System™ in Hamburg, Germany, I felt I needed more in-depth study of the subject.

The BodyTalk-System™ integrates the knowledge and practices of Western and traditional Chinese medicine, applied kinesiology, Advaita philosophy, and quantum physics.

In a four-day basic training program, I learned to communicate with the physical body using a muscle test and a sophisticated protocol to rectify imbalances within the body-mind system.

I also trained as a massage therapist to expand my knowledge of anatomy and gain more insight into the human body.

To my own surprise, and although I initially found it challenging to touch the bare bodies of total strangers, I very much enjoyed the work.

Rather than just massaging my clients, I learned to “read” their bodies with my hands while in a state of expanded awareness, in other words, Focus 12. My clients’ positive feedback confirmed my perceptions, and my appointment book was full to the brim in only a matter of months.

However, the intensive treatments also took their toll on me. I was physically exhausted when I came home from work at night. Some days, I performed massages for six or seven hours without a break. I expended more energy on my clients than was beneficial for my own health, and my well-being began to deteriorate. I rarely found the time to meditate or practice OBEs anymore.

The constant stress manifested itself as neurodermatitis. Ironically, my hands, the most crucial tools for my work, were severely affected by incessant itching and weeping eczema. A nightmare for a massage therapist.

Since I could accept fewer and fewer appointments due to my symptoms, I quickly got into a spiral of negative thoughts and general existential worries. This worsened my situation, pushing me further into victimhood and inciting resentment toward the universe.

Why me, of all people? And why my hands?

Looking back, I understand now that such questions were unhelpful. During that challenging period, I had lost my sense of direction and inner balance.

I now realize I should have reached out to my spirit team and sought guidance to discern if my current activities were aligned with my true calling and purpose.

It was essential for me to reconnect with my authentic self and find my way back to a path that resonated with my soul's journey.

7 – A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF OUT-OF-BODY EXERIENCES

"This body is not me. I am not limited by this body. I am life without boundaries. I have never been born, and I have never died."
Thich Nhat Hanh, Buddhist Monk

In the spring of 2005, I returned to California, hoping to avert a financial disaster. The shift in climate and reduction of stress soon alleviated my symptoms.

Having firmly decided against returning to my career as a TV journalist, I once again turned to tourism, guiding German tourist groups across the United States. Although I didn't see this job as my ultimate vocation, it did afford me the luxury of taking time off during the winter months.

The season was lucrative. When I bid farewell to the last group in October, I had saved enough for the winter—five long months that I planned to spend on both physical and non-physical journeys of my choice.

By this point, it had been a significant while since I had regularly practiced Out-of-Body Experiences. I was resolute in my determination to uphold the promise I had made to myself – to no longer be swayed by other people's experiences. So, I declared my inner conflict, which had peaked during the *Heartline* program, to be resolved.

Aside from attending an OBE workshop by William Buhlman, which provided me with valuable inspiration and pointers for my future growth, I practiced on my own and intentionally avoided any literature on the subject.

I heeded Bill's advice to cultivate a certain discipline and practice each day at set times. He suggested that the early hours of the morning were particularly ideal, as our minds are alert and clear, but our bodies are still relaxed.

This new routine showed its effectiveness after just a few weeks, and the

quality of my experiences increased. When I practiced in the morning, my Out-of-Body state was unquestionably more stable than what I had been accustomed to from my afternoon or evening practices.

I was especially thankful to Bill for recommending that we experiment with commands such as “clarity now!” or “front door now!” The former is used to intervene when an emerging OBE threatens to fail due to a lack of clear perception. The latter can help overcome immobility or consciousness bouncing back into the physical body.

These commands worked incredibly well for me, especially when I encountered a state of sleep paralysis, which happened quite often. This phenomenon is common among OBE practitioners and can be very frightening for those who aren’t familiar with it.

My first experience with sleep paralysis occurred in the mid-nineties, well before my first visit to the Monroe Institute. I can still recall the unsettling memory of that morning when I woke up to find myself completely immobilized.

My mind was lucid and alert, yet my body was utterly paralyzed. Despite my best efforts, I found myself unable to move even a single finger.

Lying on my side, I felt the presence of an entity at the foot of my bed. I was convinced this being harbored malevolent intentions.

A chilling thought crossed my mind: “If it touches my foot, I’ll die!”

I tried to pull my foot under the covers, but I was unable to. With my heart pounding, I rapidly succumbed to a profound fear for my life.

I can’t accurately recall how long the paralysis lasted, but those terrifying minutes seemed to stretch on before the stiffness finally dissipated and the presence of the entity faded away.

Since then, I’ve experienced sleep paralysis multiple times. Essentially, this condition is nothing more than an intensely heightened state of Focus 10, where part of your awareness already extends beyond the physical body. The strange entity I had sensed at the foot of the bed was a partial projection of my own consciousness.

Now, thanks to Bill’s advice, I know how to extract myself from this unsettling state. Using clear commands gives me the choice to either fully return to my body or to initiate a total detachment of consciousness from the body.

But sleep paralysis was never the main problem for me. It was rather that

I struggled with clumsy immobility after reaching the Out-of-Body state. As I've already mentioned, I often slid under the mattress or the couch and felt trapped there.

The commands helped in these situations as well. They allowed me to project my consciousness to another place successfully.

However, I still couldn't master navigating between dimensions.

This caused me immense frustration. Although I was able to move out of my body consciously, I kept getting stuck in physical matter reality or, rather, an energetic impression of it.

Even though colors, shapes, and materials in my surroundings didn't entirely match what I knew from waking consciousness, I usually recognized where I was. From a certain point on, traveling around the world in an Out-of-Body state became easy. I just had to think about a specific place; a moment later, I would find myself in Paris, New York, or Sydney.

What probably sounds exciting at first becomes surprisingly dull quite fast. For starters, in the energetic state, I was unable to interact with physical reality. Additionally, I was constantly a traveler.

Yet, I was never alone. I kept encountering entities who seemed to be floating around apathetically. My explanation for this is that those were sleepers—people having an unconscious OBE while they were asleep or unconscious for other reasons.

Only rarely did I encounter beings who were clearly aware of their experience and willing to communicate.

In March 2006, I was meditating in the early morning hours. After reaching the vibrational state, I decided to roll out of my body sideways. As often happens, I ended up under the bed. Then, I was taken by surprise:

It takes three attempts before I manage to maneuver into the hallway. I notice that I am walking on a hardwood floor instead of the carpet that should be there. I'm also puzzled by the blue walls that should actually be white.

I pause for a moment. Did I end up in someone else's apartment? I investigate the kitchen and dining area. The furniture is definitely mine.

I decide to leave physical reality and explore other dimensions. I immediately ascend, speeding through the roof and flying rapidly through the air. It's quite difficult to slow down. Then, I start approaching the ground

again. I have no idea where I am.

As I try to get my bearings on the landscape below me, I notice a female figure to my right. She seems just as amazed by my presence as I am by hers. We communicate telepathically.

"Are you real?" she asks.

"What do you mean?"

"I've never met anyone like you before," she continues.

Her comment surprises me. Looking down at myself, I notice that I have an upper body but no hips or legs.

Her body is complete, however. I even notice distinct female curves. I wonder if the woman may be dead and I'm dealing with some kind of ghost.

No," she replies unexpectedly. "Why should I be dead? I'm doing just fine."

I feel exposed. She can evidently read my mind. How disconcerting. Annoyed, I turn away and use the command "physical body now!"

There is a pull from behind, and I immediately jolt back into my body.

To this day, I don't know who that woman was. Looking back, I'm frustrated that I didn't ask her more questions.

Many such encounters ended abruptly in the early years because I could not make rational decisions or act deliberately during my excursions. Instead, I allowed myself to be guided by impulses, often driven by fears or insecurities.

In the above-mentioned case, I was unsettled because the other person could read my mind while I was having a telepathic conversation with her. But back then, I hadn't fully grasped the rules of communication in the non-physical.

In general, I'm profoundly grateful for all the experiences I've had so far. In their sum, they have led me to the profound realization of being more than physical matter. And each step along the way provided significant learning potential.

In the meantime, I understand that each dimension or consciousness level has its own physical, spatial, temporal, and/or energetic laws. For us on planet Earth, relatively stable basic framework conditions like time, gravity, and verbal language are a given.

In the non-physical other "environmental" conditions apply. An astral

traveler must first become familiar with these.

Especially the ability of controlled navigation requires practice and experience.

As evidenced by my encounter with the woman, movement in the non-physical requires neither legs nor wings. Consciousness is transported only by clear intentions. These can unfold tremendous powers and manifest instantly.

To prevent spiraling uncontrollably through the matrix, one should have a specific goal in mind. Those who get stuck during the journey or don't know how to proceed can learn to use available resources. This includes the support of our spirit guides and other intelligent beings.

Without external assistance, one quickly reaches their limits in uncharted non-physical territory, and many paths remain blocked. Not every area is inherently open to visitors.

I like to compare the various non-physical environments with different levels of a video game where you must master one level before reaching the next, and the player is constantly presented with new challenges.

In the spring of 2006, before starting another season as a tour guide, I spent a few weeks in Germany visiting friends and family.

I was driving from Kassel to Frankfurt on the Autobahn on a Friday afternoon when suddenly, a lady I'd met in 2002 during the *Guidelines* program popped into my mind. We'd stayed loosely in touch over the years.

At that time, Mara and her husband lived in Denver, Colorado. She was part of a group that met once a week to exchange paranormal experiences. Mara emailed me sporadically with interesting and sometimes bizarre stories from her circle.

That afternoon on the Autobahn, I had an overwhelming sensation that she was with me, not just in thought, and I kept glancing at the passenger seat. For several minutes, I couldn't shake the feeling that Mara was sitting in my car, right next to me.

Only an alert about a traffic jam on the radio made me drop the thought. The perception vanished, and I refocused on the traffic.

By the time I reached Frankfurt, I'd already forgotten the incident. That night I partied with friends and, unusually for me, went to bed way past midnight.

When I woke up the following morning, I found an email from Mara in

my mailbox:

“Hi, Ollie. I had a lot of fun with you on the German Autobahn yesterday. Don’t drive too fast. Love, Mara.”

“Unbelievable!” was my first thought.

I glanced at the clock. I would have loved to call Mara straight away, but I had to wait a few hours due to the time difference. After several unsuccessful attempts, I eventually reached her in the early evening.

“Finally!” I exclaimed into the phone and excitedly told her what had happened during the car ride from my perspective.

Mara laughed.

“So, you really did sense my presence!” she said with relief. “I gave it my all.”

“How did you manage to do that?” I asked her.

Mara explained that she had initiated an Out-of-Body Experience with the intention of finding me at six o’clock in the morning her time.

“But how did you even know that I’m in Germany?”

“I didn’t,” she replied, “but that’s not important. The intention alone matters. Instead of heading for a specific place, I let myself be guided to you.”

“By whom?”

“My spirit guides, of course,” she explained as if this were completely normal.

I was curious how Mara had managed to capture my attention and infiltrate my thoughts. During any of my Out-of-Body Experiences, I had never successfully interacted with another person who was awake.

“I guess the circumstances were just right. I had a clear intention, and you were in a state of expanded awareness at the right moment. This happens automatically when we drive along the highway and don’t have to concentrate too much,” she explained.

Mara touched on an important point. While driving, I let my thoughts wander and switched to autopilot.

This created an optimal basis for perceiving subtle impulses akin to the state of expanded awareness.

“How are you doing with your OBE practice?” I asked Mara. “What are your biggest challenges?”

Unlike me, she didn’t encounter many obstacles, as I learned.

We shared our respective experiences and how they shaped our understanding of Out-of-Body Experiences. Our lengthy conversation gave me a lot to ponder and prompted me to reevaluate the knowledge I had previously gathered from the relevant literature.

Mara had come to the realization that the foundational theories explaining and describing Out-of-Body Experiences were no longer current.

“Don’t waste your time with those silly exit techniques,” she advised me that evening.

Like most people interested in exploring Out-of-Body Experiences, I delved into many books on the subject when I commenced my experiments.

Early works often suggested that the soul is tethered to the physical body and can disengage from it as a sort of energy body through appropriate exercises. According to these accounts, this energy body is linked to the physical body via a “silver cord.”

The theory states that the cord connects the body and soul from birth, serving as a safety tether during an OBE, ensuring that the soul always finds its way back into the body. If the silver cord severs, life ends.

Mara viewed the traditional explanation of the interplay between the soul and body as too restrictive and outdated.

“Those ideas are over a hundred years old,” she stated.

In her understanding, the nature of human consciousness was much more complex than a simple interplay between body and soul.

Her words struck a nerve. Despite years of experimentation and countless successful OBEs, I had never clearly discerned my supposed energy body. Nor had the silver cord ever been a feature.

But how is it that so many people report experiencing exactly that phenomenon?

Mara suggested the possibility that the energy body and the silver cord might be manifestations of those individuals’ expectations. Today, I share a similar viewpoint, understanding that non-physical environments are responsive to thought and react instantaneously. This also explains why individual reports of perceptions in an out-of-body state vary greatly.

My conversation with Mara was a catalyst. I began to realize that notions such as energy bodies or silver cords were mere beliefs as long as I couldn’t corroborate them with my own experiences. Until then, I had never

questioned the explanations and mechanisms I had read about.

It's never easy to discard old belief systems, especially those delineating and upholding your worldview. But perhaps it was time to open myself to new impulses and opportunities if I wanted to advance.

It's not without reason that Robert Monroe consistently emphasized: "Don't believe anything I tell you. Go out there and find out for yourself."

By now, I have taken those words to heart. While it's vitally important and beneficial to draw inspiration from other people and their experiences, only your own direct experiences can lead to sustainable personal growth.

I could read ten books that mention a silver cord. But if I don't perceive the cord, my reality differs from those ten authors. That doesn't make my experience less significant. Quite the contrary. If I remain true to my own reality, I respect and honor my personal journey.

At the outset of his explorations, Robert Monroe also believed that a second body detaches from the physical body during an OBE. He reassessed this theory later, considering the phenomenon more as a kind of projection. Monroe suggested that people identify with their physical form due to lifelong conditioning, even when in an out-of-body state.

With the realization that he didn't have to go through all the trouble of detaching himself from the physical body, Monroe developed a method he called Quick Switch Technique. He would extend his consciousness or awareness like a rubber band and make a connection to where he wanted to go. Then he would let go at the starting point, snapping himself to the destination.

The process of "making a connection" refers to the intention setting and the focusing of the mind on the specific destination, creating a direct mental link. The destination could be a physical place, a different plane of existence, or even another person.

The act of "letting go at the starting point" is about releasing the connection to the physical body or the current state of awareness, allowing the consciousness to be "snapped" to the destination in the same way a stretched rubber band will snap back to its original form when let go. This way, Monroe could instantly transition his consciousness from one location to another.

He later called this process Phasing.

The term Phasing originates from the field of physics and conceptualizes

consciousness as a form of oscillation or waveform that aligns with physical reality but can also remove itself from it. This happens fluidly or in stages.

According to Monroe, trance, hypnosis, meditation, and even OBEs are merely manifestations of a single phenomenon where consciousness focuses beyond physical reality in different ways and to varying degrees.

The individual's intent determines the destination of the journey. A clear intention can transition an individual from the confined state of physical waking consciousness to other, more expansive levels of awareness.

I was already familiar with the Phasing technique, having explored it at the Monroe seminars. My experiences with it had been quite intriguing. But are Phasing and Out-of-Body Experiences truly one and the same?

This sparked new questions: What exactly constitutes an OBE? What occurs when I leave my body? Do I really exit my physical form?

Even today, there are no definitive answers, but there is no shortage of opinions, personal accounts, studies, theories, and research findings.

An OBE is generally characterized as an event that involves a sensation of floating outside the physical body and perceiving one's own form from a bird's eye view.

Particularly, those who have had a spontaneous OBE often describe this sensation. Individuals who have undergone near-death experiences report similar perceptions.

However, those who deliberately train to induce an OBE often struggle to replicate such experiences. Only a few successfully perceive their physical bodies, yet many remain determined to achieve this, viewing the above-mentioned universal assumption as proof of a successful OBE.

One possible explanation could be that the prerequisites for each circumstance are vastly different. Personal expectations, belief systems, and unconscious fears can influence the desired outcome.

From my own experience, I can say that every conscious attempt I made in this direction failed and led to an abrupt end of the OBE.

Nowadays, I regard such endeavors as a waste of time. If I want to see my own body, all I need to do is stand in front of a mirror. There's no need to spend months practicing.

At this point, I would like to emphasize that the classic out-of-body exercises described in detail in the relevant literature, although outdated, are still important as an approach to practicing OBEs. I see them as tools that the

practitioner can use until they become obsolete.

I too, spent years working with these exercises; they were an integral part of my own evolutionary process.

My intention is not to judge which method is superior. I advocate for everyone to test the available methods and draw conclusions. I aim to share my personal experiences in hopes of inspiring others.

Ultimately, the goal is to achieve an astral projection. The way it is initiated doesn't matter as much. The primary concerns should be a clear intention and the results produced by the chosen method or approach.

Personally, I could only progress to a certain point with the traditional exercises to exit the body. However, the experience I gained through this process is invaluable, not least because I learned a lot about myself.

Yet, I don't want to dismiss the existence of an energy body outright. While I do perceive an energy field, I wouldn't classify it as a separate body. For me, the concept of an energy body is an analogy for a non-physical phenomenon that is worth exploring.

Drawing upon the discoveries of numerous physicists, quantum physicists, philosophers, and consciousness researchers, we can hypothesize that consciousness is not a product of the brain and, thus, not anchored in the physical body. It exists independently of space and time.

From my perspective, the idea of leaving the physical body during an OBE doesn't quite hold up, even if this perception is achieved under certain circumstances.

Nowadays, I view consciousness as a fundamental intelligence that has manifested various environments in the interest of its own evolutionary process, of which our physical reality is just one of the infinitely many realities within a complex matrix.

Practicing the Phasing technique was my next logical step after talking to Mara.

If I effectively sidestep the process of leaving my physical body and aim to focus my consciousness directly on another location, I first need to establish a state of profound mental calm. While it's not absolutely necessary to also relax the body completely, it can be beneficial when practicing until a certain level of confidence in using the method is established.

Achieving a stable Focus 10 is, therefore, an optimal starting point. But

not everyone finds it easy to quiet down both the mind and body. Those who have already established a regular meditation practice definitely have a head start.

I've made it a habit to meditate for at least 20 minutes every morning. When I find my thoughts intruding, I resort to a simple mantra, mentally reciting the words: "I am" or "here and now" in rhythm with my breath.

Once I establish a state of complete internal tranquility, I reach a point where I no longer engage mentally with physical reality. My brain no longer processes any information. I become one with everything and experience pure existence.

Physicist and consciousness researcher Thomas Campbell aptly labels this state as Point Consciousness.

Strictly speaking, an OBE already begins at this stage. Ideally, I also lose any perception of the physical body in this state. My individual consciousness is free to focus elsewhere within the vast expanse of collective or universal consciousness.

As always, it's crucial to form a clear intention before the meditation begins. Those who work with the Monroe Method commence each exercise with a preparatory process, which includes a specific affirmation as well as supportive energy work.

Monroe's Focus level scale, a map of sorts for the consciousness matrix, offers a variety of non-physical environments that can be accessed from Point Consciousness. Hemi-Sync frequencies or frequencies used by Monroe Sound Science assist in maintaining a stable focus effortlessly.

Depending on one's personal intention, Phasing can assume different degrees.

Consciousness is essentially able to focus on more than one place simultaneously. Proper training allows me to control my awareness in a way that facilitates parallel perception and even interaction.

This implies, for instance, that I can perceive sounds from my physical surroundings while simultaneously communicating with someone in Focus 27. The key is not to be distracted by the physical sounds. The moment I react, I quickly slide back toward waking consciousness.

In our everyday lives, we constantly shift our attention from one point to another without much consideration or questioning the process. I can play a game on my cellphone and watch television at the same time. Sometimes I

focus on the TV set and, at other times, on the phone in my hand. To some degree, I can follow both the game and the movie simultaneously in this state of divided or parallel awareness.

Consciousness knows no limits. We simply need to recondition our physical apparatus and eliminate beliefs that constrain us.

One belief frequently appearing in esoteric literature, and one I had unconsciously adopted, is that our physical body houses the soul.

But what if the opposite is true, and the body exists within the soul? A consideration that can flip our inner and outer worlds upside down.

To sum up, it can now be stated that Out-of-Body Experiences are a refocusing of consciousness beyond the physical body.

We interrupt the information flow from one reality to plug into the information flow of another reality.

The greatest challenge is that each level operates under its own rules, which can greatly differ from those of our physical reality.

One example is lucid dreams, dreams where we are entirely aware that we’re dreaming and can act according to our decisions. During a lucid dream, we can, for instance, fly, while gravity prevents us from doing so in our physical reality.

To me, lucid dreams also belong to the category of OBEs. The difference is that we first fall asleep before we regain consciousness, while a classical OBE is generally initiated from waking consciousness.

8 – PERCEPTION AND NON-PHYSICAL SENSES

"Thought is so cunning, so clever,
that it distorts everything for its own convenience."
Jiddu Krishnamurti, Indian Philosopher

"I am more than my physical body" – this phrase served as Robert Monroe's creed. It underpinned his research into consciousness and stands as the starting point for all Monroe Institute courses. They are the first words of the Gateway Affirmation, integral to the preparatory process for every classic Monroe meditation.

Many people don't doubt that there is something more. Something that goes beyond the biological aspects of our being. For example, by firmly believing that they have a soul.

Through decades of research, Robert Monroe expanded and refined his understanding of what it means to exist beyond our physicality. Though challenging to measure and seemingly intangible for many, this concept continued to fascinate him.

Monroe began his quest for evidence and explanations without the burden of religious ideologies or the dominant scientific and cultural norms. His efforts culminated in a groundbreaking, complex model of the manifestations and laws that govern our existence in the non-physical realm.

Countless Out-of-Body Experiences left Monroe convinced that the physical dimension is merely a tiny fragment of an enormous matrix. Our human perspective is extremely limited and makes it difficult, if not impossible, to comprehend the full extent of this structure in its entirety. But this didn't deter Monroe from asking questions and searching for answers. And, in my opinion, he developed very helpful tools for this exploration with his Hemi-Sync exercises.

The Monroe Method enables us to explore at least parts of the matrix.

Those who engage with the process don't only broaden their personal but

also our collective horizon, and this doesn't require years of meditation or the use of psychedelic drugs.

However, these explorations into the non-physical come with their own set of challenges. It's not as simple as playing a Hemi-Sync recording and closing your eyes, only to return an hour later with a comprehensive report from your journey into the matrix's depths. Utilizing this method demands a certain level of discipline and training.

While Hemi-Sync supports us in accessing precisely defined states of consciousness, navigating within these levels, and developing our cognitive abilities there is an individual journey.

The experience can be roughly compared to booking a trip without a tour guide, a guidebook, a translation app, and Google Maps. The plane will drop you off in Paris, but finding and recognizing landmarks like the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower, or Montmartre is up to you! The locals speak a different language, and if you don't know French, you'll need to get creative to navigate these unfamiliar surroundings.

The most important basis for the successful application of the Monroe Method is to formulate a clear intention. This reduces the chance of getting lost in meditation or drifting aimlessly.

Just as a tourist in Paris needs a clear intention—whether it's to climb the Eiffel Tower, gaze into the Mona Lisa's eyes, or savor an authentic croissant—you must have a distinct aim for your non-physical journeys.

Most likely, you'll want to return with a record of significant experiences, necessitating a thorough understanding of your perceptual skills to prepare for the journey.

Since the information flow in the matrix's depths is governed by different laws than our usual environment, we need to recalibrate, expand, and fine-tune our “antennas.” What we commonly refer to as our “sixth sense” or gut instinct is crucial in this respect.

While some people naturally or spontaneously tap into their intuition, most need to train or refine this ability first.

Our five classic human sensory organs—eyes, ears, nose, taste buds, and skin—are finely tuned to our physical environment. These receptors take in signals and information from our surroundings and quickly transfer them to the brain, where they are processed and interpreted.

Our senses allow us not only to survive in the physical realm but also to experience all its facets consciously.

We feel the texture of objects through our skin, taste flavors like chocolate or pepper on our tongue, hear melodies, see signs and symbols, and smell fragrances. As long as our awareness is centered in physical reality, we can rely on these senses, assuming they function properly.

Even the constant sensory overload that most people are exposed to nowadays is usually not a problem for our five senses. They adapt to the new demands. Technological advancements like hearing aids and glasses can help mitigate the effects of stress and aging.

However, when exploring non-physical environments, it's necessary to disengage from the external noise and calm both body and mind. This involves turning off the physical senses to perceive the much subtler signals from other dimensions.

The aim is to firmly focus one’s attention on a non-physical realm without being distracted by external stimuli. The exchange of information in non-physical environments occurs telepathically.

During telepathic communication, the physical senses no longer act as primary receptors. They are only indirectly engaged through the so-called sixth sense, our intuition.

Information that is conveyed to us by spirit guides, deceased individuals, or other intelligent energy forms usually reaches us almost exclusively through this channel. Intuition is defined as the ability to understand or recognize something instantly and without conscious reasoning.

Although intuitive perception often manifests as sudden understanding, it can also take forms similar to physical sensory perception. We see images in our mind's eye or receive auditory impulses that others cannot hear. Intuition can make itself felt through tactile sensations, muscle responses, or even a sense of smell. Beyond sensory perceptions, it often also evokes emotional responses.

Intuitive perception is highly individual. Each person has primary and secondary channels through which they receive information from non-physical dimensions. If you want to enhance your perceptive faculties, you need to start by understanding the ways in which this information reaches you. These pathways can differ greatly from person to person.

Do you see images in your mind’s eye? Or do you hear voices in your

inner ear? Do you experience emotions or feelings that trigger something inside you? Do you suddenly have knowledge you didn't previously possess? You may even perceive signals through your physical body.

Regular meditation, especially guided meditations, can help you understand your intuitive perceptions as they often target the sixth sense.

It is important not to become fixated on a particular channel of perception during meditation.

Many of my workshop participants become unnecessarily frustrated because they expect to experience clairvoyance. Trying to force visual perceptions often creates barriers and prevents them from noticing important information coming through other perception channels.

Seeing with the mind's eye appears to be the only acceptable form of inner perception for many people. The reason for this is likely that a person with healthy eyes perceives about 80 percent of the environment through visual impressions. Even our dreams are represented as picture sequences. We are biologically conditioned to rely on sight.

The consumption of experiential reports, in which the authors often refer to visual perceptions in non-physical environments, also fosters a corresponding expectation.

For an author, translating supernatural experiences into secular vocabulary is an enormous challenge. When dealing with experiences that have no words, they often resort to using images to convey corresponding impressions to the reader.

Then, editors strive to make the descriptions as clear and concrete as possible, potentially creating the impression that intuitive information must always unfold like a Hollywood movie. However, the reality of these experiences can be vastly different.

Documenting and conveying extrasensory experiences is a very delicate process, extremely prone to distortion.

And finally, the reader applies his own interpretation based on his personal wealth of experience and his own ideas of unfamiliar realities.

Another challenge when exploring non-physical environments is our brain's constant activity.

During waking consciousness, our brain promptly analyzes all incoming information, compares it with prior experiences, and quickly categorizes it as

true or false, important or unimportant. Indeed, it is how we have been taught, how we are conditioned. This helps us navigate our complex, fast-paced world.

However, when exploring non-physical environments, this mental hyperactivity can be obstructive. It's crucial not to evaluate or analyze intuitively received signals immediately. As soon as our brain starts its thinking process, we exit the state of expanded awareness and automatically return to waking consciousness.

To illustrate how our brain receives and processes information, I like to use the analogy of receiver and interpreter. The receiver, located in the right hemisphere of the brain, absorbs data without filtering it. The interpreter, in the left hemisphere, retrieves and processes this data as quickly as possible.

The role of the receiver is to align our mental antennas to gather the maximum amount of information possible. Depending on the source of the information, the receiver needs to adjust this alignment continually. Otherwise, we may only pick up background noise, similar to the static from a poorly tuned radio.

The interpreter's job is to constantly retrieve as much data as possible from the receiving end of the brain before it falls into disarray or fades away and becomes unusable.

The interpreter is a pieceworker who, over the years, acquired the additional qualification of an astute curator. He not only translates the information he receives, but also classifies and analyzes it. During the process, the highly motivated interpreter has no consideration whatsoever for the receiver’s sensitive task. He takes pride in his work. Once he has completed a job, he calls out:

“Hi! I’m finished. Here’s the result. Come on, check it out!”

If we follow his call, we lose our focus, and the receiver’s antenna loses its optimum alignment.

The interpreter craves attention. When we ignore him, he instantly feels threatened in his existence and develops new tactics to get through to us. He gets louder, creates more and more connections, and bombards us with irrelevant information.

Let’s assume that I am meditating. The picture of a burning candle

penetrates the darkness before my mind’s eye. This perception is pure and authentic at this stage—the receiver has done an excellent job.

Then, the interpreter takes over, quickly searching the brain's database to assign meaning to this image.

It might connect the candle to my fond memories of lighting candles during the Christmas season. So, he sends the memory of Christmas into my awareness to explain the significance of the candle.

Ideally, after making that connection, the interpreter would step back and allow the receiver to resume its role. But, feeling threatened, the interpreter goes into overdrive.

It starts sending more connections to my awareness—reminding me I haven't bought a Christmas gift for my father yet, which leads to thinking about a potential gift, which leads to thoughts about my father's love for fishing, which leads to thoughts about trout and food, and then considerations about my freezer's electricity consumption.

As these cascading thoughts invade my brain, I lose my focus. The chain of thought spirals out of control, and the original perception—the image of the candle—has long disappeared from my inner vision.

In frustration, I realize I've been drawn back into waking consciousness.

The key is learning to balance the roles of the receiver and the interpreter in our brains to maintain a productive flow of information. This requires the ability to direct our attention swiftly and purposefully between the two.

Ideally, we want to be able to purely receive data while in an expanded state of awareness and then store it in its raw form. We can then later process this data and interpret it at our leisure or pass it along to others in its original form.

Mastering this process requires training and patience.

The perception of experiences in the non-physical occurs in two steps: the intake and processing of information and translating of that information into a physical frame of reference. This process leaves plenty of room for confusion and misinterpretation. It raises the question: How reliable or authentic are our perceptions? A significant factor is our personal reference repertoire.

Every human brain has a unique and limited set of references to process received information, which is based on our individual life experiences.

For example, the brain of an elderly, well-educated gentleman from

London, England, who has traveled extensively throughout his lifetime will have a different reference repertoire than that of a young man from the remote Pacific islands who has never left his fishing village and likely has no access to modern media.

Another example: When a deceased person wants to communicate about Mount Everest with a Pacific islander who has never so far in his life seen a snow-covered high mountain range, the brain cannot find a relevant reference point. The experience simply doesn’t exist for him.

Because the brain doesn’t know what a high mountain range looks like, it can’t draw on memory and now looks for the next best point of reference. In the case of the islander, this could be a tall palm tree, the view from up high over the beach, or a feeling of vertigo.

It's then up to that individual to interpret and categorize the information, which always carries a certain risk of distortion.

In my early years of consciousness research, I often felt disappointed and impatient. I frequently disregarded data and signals I received during my Out-of-Body journeys as confused, unclear, or insignificant. I was constantly seeking some extraordinary experience that would eradicate all my doubts.

I might still be waiting for such a life-altering event had I not drastically changed my approach. Now, I embark on my non-physical explorations with relative serenity, aware that I can only somewhat influence how information is transferred.

I have great faith in my own developmental process, particularly because I can now reflect on numerous verifiable experiences.

Much like learning a new language or a musical instrument, some people are naturally gifted and pick it up quickly, while others must practice consistently. Unfortunately, I fall into the latter category and had first to learn how to manage my frustration productively.

When I visit a foreign country, I can't expect the locals to understand my native language. I need to be open to their language, just as they need to find ways to communicate with me if they want to welcome me as a visitor.

I've made it a habit to write down all my perceptions after every meditation, no matter how trivial they seem. I regularly revisit these notes, many of which are years old, because often it’s the small details that matter the most. Sometimes, the significance of these notes only becomes clear

weeks or months later.

Unfortunately, I undervalued the importance of meticulously documenting my experiences in my early days, something I now regret. For this reason, I urge people to write, write, write!

Another useful tool for capturing important details is the audio recorder app, widely available for all smartphones if not preinstalled. With a bit of practice, you can learn to verbally note your experiences during meditation without being pulled back into waking consciousness.

Here's an example that illustrates how crucial notetaking can be for long-term development: After I established a routine of writing down my experiences, I noticed months later that I frequently mentioned experiencing spontaneous goosebumps during particular meditations.

I had not paid attention to this kinesthetic signal before because it didn't seem significant. However, when I reviewed my notes and saw a pattern, I began to appreciate its importance.

I thought back to when and where I had felt this tingling sensation before and recalled a séance I attended in 2001 in Byron Bay, Australia.

During that event, I felt an undefinable energy coursing through my body, causing my hair to stand on end. The energy seemed to enter through my left arm and spread rapidly throughout my body. All I felt for a few seconds was an electrifying prickle all over my skin.

Each time the sensation seemed to subside, another wave would hit me, causing distinct goosebumps. The intervals between these surges grew shorter, and my initial curiosity turned to intense fear, paralyzing me physically and mentally.

Thankfully, Mary, the medium conducting the séance, noticed what was happening and reacted immediately. I still remember how swiftly she grabbed my hands and directed the energy out of my body.

Mary explained to me later that she occasionally has similar experiences when she contacts entities from the spiritual realm. Over time, she learned to handle this energy productively.

After the séance, Mary gave me precise instructions on preventing a panic attack if the phenomenon were to occur again.

Only a few days later, the energy surges and the associated goosebumps reappeared. This time, I was alone on my patio, enjoying the sunset and the sound of the ocean while sipping a cup of tea.

But instead of panicking, I channeled the energy as Mary had instructed. Though I hardly slept that night, I didn't give much thought to the incident afterward.

When the phenomenon occurred for the third time a few days later, I wasn't worried at all anymore and just dealt with it.

This memory presented a new starting point for my search to explain the tingling. Could the recurring goosebumps possibly be an indication that some entity from the afterlife was trying to make contact? Mary had, after all, reported similar symptoms in the past.

I decided to observe the phenomenon more closely.

My theory seemed to gain support as these inexplicable goosebumps were consistently followed by perceptions that could be interpreted as messages from the afterlife. I felt a mix of elation and anxiety. Was I really prepared to open my inner doors to visitors from other realms?

Several weeks after making this discovery, I accepted an invitation to a barbecue in Venice Beach, California. The host, Laura, a long-time friend, asked me to accompany her on a shopping trip to the grocery store. During a lively discussion about her hometown in Germany, Laura casually mentioned that she had lost her father when she was still a teenager. I wanted to ask about the cause of her father's premature death, but the moment didn't seem appropriate.

Back at her house, Laura started preparing the food. I was leaning against the kitchen door's frame, watching her seasoning the steaks, when I suddenly and totally unexpectedly felt an energy surge and its associated goosebumps.

This time, I didn't dispel the energy at once. Using a special technique I had learned at the Monroe Institute, it only took a single breath to reach the state of expanded awareness.

I promptly saw images of a dark-haired man in a white coat and felt an unpleasant pressure on my chest.

The timing seemed incredibly inappropriate. I wasn't sure how Laura would react if I shared my perceptions with her. Although I had told her about my experiences at the Monroe Institute, she didn't seem to fully grasp my stories. The supernatural had simply not been a part of her life experience and, therefore, not a part of her reality.

Nonetheless, this presented a valuable opportunity to determine if my perceptions were merely figments of my imagination or if I genuinely had a

connection to the afterlife.

I drew a deep breath and asked Laura to put the kitchen knife down for a minute.

I then gave her a brief overview of what I had been working on in recent weeks. To my relief, she reacted with surprising calm and even expressed interest. However, she seemed slightly uncomfortable when I hinted that I was sensing a presence in her house.

“Do you know who it is?” she asked tentatively.

I shook my head.

“No, but maybe you’ll recognize the person if I describe what I’m sensing.”

She hesitated before she nodded.

I then proceeded to describe the man in as much detail as I could muster. It was clear that Laura recognized her father in my description. In addition to his dark hair and white coat, I had also perceived a hospital setting. When I mentioned the pressure on my ribcage, I even felt the tension this man must have experienced shortly before his death.

My mind immediately began to analyze and interpret the information I had received. At that time, I didn’t have enough experience to halt this process and simply relayed my perceptions to Laura unfiltered.

In her case, I was fortunate that my interpretations weren’t entirely off the mark, though they weren’t completely accurate either. According to my interpretation, Laura’s father wore a surgical shirt and died at the hospital from a cardiac defect.

In actuality, Laura’s father happened to be a cardiologist at a clinic and died from a heart attack while at work.

This example highlights how quickly we can distort perceptions through our own interpretations.

Initially, having my perceptions validated was hugely beneficial. However, relying on external confirmation can soon become a hindrance, leading to insecurity when it is not immediately available.

How can I know if my perception is real and not just based on imagination? Where do the images, feelings, and emotions that present themselves to me come from?

For years I grappled with doubts. I dismissed perceptions that my rational

mind couldn’t explain as fanciful and purged them from my awareness. My inner skeptic was working overtime.

This only changed when I asked myself what the word imagination actually means and if it truly deserves the bad reputation many people attribute to it.

I realized that imagination is a vital form of perception that should not be overlooked.

I clearly remember the moment my perceptions took a significant leap in clarity. It was the day I consciously decided to set aside my doubts and cultivate trust. From then on, I firmly believed that I was perceiving exactly what was useful and important for me and those close to me at any given moment.

If we allow ourselves to accept a perception that contradicts one of our belief patterns as real, we eradicate that belief and any associated blockages. As a result, the information we receive begins to flow more clearly and distinctly.

Thanks to this newfound trust, I no longer hesitate to articulate my perceptions as long as it is appropriate for the situation.

I find it hugely important to verbalize observations, perceptions, or received information. Alternatively, I also like to artistically express them as paintings, sketches, or drawings. Giving physical expression to these fleeting impressions imbues them with a new, tangible quality.

In the process, further information often spontaneously surfaces that would otherwise remain hidden.

Many people hesitate to share their perceptions, fearing ridicule or the possibility of being wrong. I certainly understand their apprehension. In this case, I find it helpful to examine the authenticity of the personal intent. This step generally saves us from making mistakes.

Placing trust in your own abilities can yield beautiful outcomes. For instance, my wife Anna’s grandmother, Hedwig, who passed away at 98 years old, was particularly communicative in the first few months after her death. Almost every day, I sensed her presence or received some form of communication from her.

During our first trip to Germany following her passing, Anna and I visited Hedwig’s grave and her apartment.

“I wonder where Granny might be now,” Anna mused as we drove.

Almost immediately, the name Otto appeared in my mind, much like a rapid download on a computer screen. I could even visualize the letters. Otto! That’s all the information I received, just the name and nothing else.

The name didn’t mean anything to me. In the past, I might have disregarded the impression, thinking: If I don’t know who Otto is, the information can’t be correct.

“Your granny is with Otto,” I replied.

Anna was puzzled. The name Otto meant as little to her as it did to me. Even after pondering it for a while, she couldn’t recall anybody named Otto in her grandma’s life.

Hedwig’s husband’s name had been Paul, and he’d passed away long before she did. After joking briefly about the possibility of Otto being Hedwig’s secret lover, we moved on to another topic.

Had I perhaps just imagined the name Otto?

When we arrived at Hedwig’s apartment about an hour later, I distinctly sensed her presence.

“I feel as if she wants to show us something,” I explained to Anna, who anxiously trailed me from room to room.

In the bedroom, I had a strong urge to open the nightstand’s drawer.

“We don’t need to look in there,” Anna said. “Mum and I checked it after the funeral. It’s empty.”

But my intuition was so clear that I felt compelled to follow it. I gently pulled the small wooden knob, revealing an indeed empty drawer, its bottom lined with flower-patterned paper. When I lifted the paper, I found a yellowed envelope.

It was challenging to make out the old German handwriting, but we were astounded when we saw who had signed the letter: Otto!

Suddenly, Anna remembered. Otto had been Hedwig’s younger brother. He had perished as a soldier in World War II. This was his last letter from the frontline to his sister, in which he expressed his anticipation for his long overdue leave to come home.

The siblings didn’t meet again until seventy years later, in the afterlife.

It seemed that it had been important for Hedwig to clear up the confusion about who she was with.

The communication between the physical and non-physical realms is multifaceted and fascinating. In fact, it should be easy for us to communicate with our spirit guides and deceased relatives. After all, the place where they reside, the afterlife, is in essence, also our home.

Why do we still have such a sense of disconnection from it?

When we incarnate into physical reality, memories of our non-physical existence fade. This is a protective measure because if we could remember our pre-physical existence, we would be plagued by intense longing for our real home.

From early childhood, we are guided to follow certain rhythms and to focus on things pertinent to our new surroundings. We learn reading, writing, math, and physics.

However, we are not taught what could arguably be considered our actual mother tongue: nonverbal communication. Quite the opposite, in fact. Those who don't conform and express an interest in the supernatural often face ridicule.

As a result, we lose conscious contact at an early age with those entities that remain present for us on the other side.

If we find a way to draw on our memories, we can once again get closer to our essence, the higher self, and reawaken our perceptual abilities.

Someone who has gone through this process is the medium Fleur Leussink. When she was eight years old, Fleur and her family emigrated from the Netherlands to the USA. Little did she suspect that she would one day earn her living as an intermediary between the worlds.

As a medium, Fleur conducts both one-on-one sessions and performances for large audiences, as well as offering courses on intuition development. Already in her mid-twenties, she was one of the youngest professionals in her field and also one of the most skilled, as I can personally attest.

I have witnessed Fleur in action multiple times and have even attended one of her workshops in my quest for new insights and inspiration.

We met some time ago to exchange our experiences and understandings of perception and communication with the deceased. While my main goal is to explore various environments of the afterlife, Fleur perceives her role primarily as a messenger, giving voice to those who have passed away.

Our discussion quickly revealed how much our experiences overlap. Fleur's pragmatic approach particularly resonates with me, as she regards her

gift as a craft that anyone can learn, given sufficient discipline.

Fleur measures her success at the end of a session by whether she has been able to relay detailed and deeply personal information from the life of a deceased person to her clients.

She first came into contact with the spirit world as a preschooler, seeing the dead as tangibly as the living.

“I always tried to protect myself and suppress my perceptions. As a ten-year-old, I had finally reached the point where I was able to close the door.”

It wasn’t until her first year of medical school that Fleur began to reacquaint herself with her past and rediscover her unique abilities.

“Even though I’ve redeveloped my perceptual abilities, I generally don’t see the deceased in 3D anymore. And I’m grateful for that,” she explains.

Fleur receives signals from the deceased through all her perceptual channels. She can feel and hear them and occasionally see them in her mind.

But much of the information is incomplete and partly encrypted.

“Many people believe that an entity whispers information into a medium’s ear, as if someone is reading it aloud or as if the medium is mentally watching a complete movie,” says Fleur, “but the reality is different. Every now and then, I receive an image, individual fragments, or symbols. I then must piece these parts together like a jigsaw puzzle.”

Fleur calls the entities she communicates with souls. To her, they very much continue to exist. From her experience, communication with these souls happens on a specific frequency spectrum.

“The physical body is nothing more than a mass of atoms and molecules vibrating at a certain frequency. When we die and leave our physical body behind, our frequency changes, and we take on a different density,” she explains.

When Fleur wants to communicate with non-physical entities, she consciously increases her vibrational frequency while the deceased entities adjust theirs. In Fleur’s words, they meet each other halfway.

“To locate this meeting point is like trying to find a small road leading to a major highway on a map. It’s a subtle process, you need to know the area extremely well to pinpoint the exact location,” she explains.

According to Fleur, the key to successful communication with the spirit realm lies in practice, dedication, and regular meditation.

“The more frequently you make the journey, the faster you reach that point where the worlds converge,” she says.

Fleur believes that every entity has its unique energy signature. Each deceased person operates at an individual frequency which slightly differs from the rest. The more accurately you can adjust to these various frequencies, the clearer and more precise the transmission of information will be.

Fleur encourages beginners not to fear making mistakes. She views errors as an integral part of the learning process, suggesting we can always trace our steps back and try again.

“It’s incredibly important to understand how it feels to get it wrong as opposed to getting it right. Recognizing the difference teaches you whether you can trust your perception,” she says.

At this point, Fleur trusts her perception nearly one hundred percent.

“If someone tells me my information is incorrect, I can discern whether or not they are right. Sometimes they’re simply wrong. I’ll then ask them to trust me and verify the information when they get home. But you can only make this distinction if you’ve been wrong enough times.”

I had the chance to witness this precise scenario during one of Fleur’s public appearances that I attended with my wife and a mutual acquaintance, Catherine. This was Catherine’s first time attending a medium’s event.

On stage, Fleur constantly moves, pacing back and forth to maintain a stable energy flow. Depending on the duration of the event, she establishes approximately 10 to 15 connections with the afterlife per evening, known as “links.”

Initially, Fleur describes specific features or characteristics of the deceased, along with details from their life and cause of death, until someone in the audience recognizes the deceased as a relative or friend.

That evening, Catherine raised her hand when she thought she recognized her late father from Fleur’s description. Fleur then addressed her directly and explained that Catherine’s father had died from lung disease and had three children.

Catherine immediately objected, saying that she only had one brother, so it couldn’t possibly be her father.

“He’s definitely showing me a three,” Fleur replied calmly but firmly. “I’m absolutely certain that it is your father. I sense him standing beside me

right now."

Catherine continued to reject this assertion, but Fleur wouldn't be swayed.

The entire audience watched the exchange with bated breath. Neither woman would back down. Even as Fleur described additional accurate details from her father's life, Catherine remained unconvinced.

When Fleur eventually moved on to establish a new connection, Catherine suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, my God, you're right! He did have three children. My dad had an adopted daughter from another relationship that we never really accepted."

Fleur sighed with relief and could now continue with the reading. To conclude, she described in detail how Catherine had sat at her father's deathbed, holding his hand in the presence of a nurse.

Even in front of an audience of 70 people, Fleur had not hesitated to stick to her seemingly "incorrect" information. After years of practice, she's confident in her perception channels and maintains them through regular meditation.

"My work requires me to be in a very calm mental state," she explains. "When I'm consistently in a stressful environment, I eventually reach my limits and can't connect with my soul or higher self."

This understanding is key to her abilities, Fleur feels.

"We must first learn to establish a connection with our higher self. Only then can we connect with other souls," she says.

When I asked her if she's ever encountered negative energies, Fleur answered, "Never. I've met many bad people here on Earth, but never a bad soul in the spirit world."

She continues, stating that it's indeed possible for deceased individuals to present themselves through negative energy if they did wrong in life.

"If I would describe a formerly bad guy as a beautiful angel, the other person wouldn't know what I'm talking about. As soon as that person realizes whom I'm describing, the energy changes and the guy on the other side presents himself in his positive essence."

Many people find contacting the dead and astral travel eerie and even potentially dangerous.

Personally, I've never felt threatened, harassed, or attacked by beings in

the spiritual world. And until now, I have yet to encounter a single demonic entity.

This could be due to my personal interpretation or perhaps the methodology I employ, but any negative energies I have experienced have always turned out to be manifestations of my own mind.

There have been instances where I initially perceived an energy form as negative. Upon closer examination, however, these perceptions invariably turned out not to be separate entities but projections of my own fears or negative thoughts that had taken shape in a non-physical environment.

Non-physical surroundings are highly thought-responsive. This applies to thoughts we project out of our physical reality in waking consciousness as well as those we project during an OBE.

As such, it is normal and expected that we encounter our own—often unconsciously created—manifestations during Out-of-Body Experiences.

Whenever I perceive a negative energy form, I instantly confront it and ask:

“Who are you? What do you want?”

Typically, the perception fades away at this point. If it doesn’t, I engage with the energy, trying to establish its source. I believe it’s vitally important to approach your own consciousness research fearlessly and not allow yourself to be unsettled by the horror stories of others.

Our thoughts are potent energy carriers that can trigger immediate consequences. Thus, a controlled approach is crucial when experimenting with Out-of-Body Experiences.

Infiltrating non-physical environments can unpredictably impact those who reside there. Astral travelers who breezily navigate the matrix can be perceived as disruptive.

The analogy could be drawn to a poltergeist, an entity from the non-physical realm that projects itself into physical reality and creates a disturbance.

In my experience, a sense of losing control or unclear impressions serve as warning signs. If your perception during an OBE becomes fuzzy or your ability to navigate with reasonable safety and control diminishes, it’s advisable to pull back.

Before delving into the depths of the matrix, I recommend attending a workshop or online course to gain the necessary foundational knowledge.

When we focus our consciousness on non-physical surroundings during an OBE, the familiar physical laws we've internalized as ever-present in our physical environment no longer apply.

Concepts like gravity, space, and time cease to exist. Non-physical worlds are characterized by their breathtaking responsiveness to our intentions, and the immediate consequences of this can sometimes be overwhelming.

In our familiar reality, due to its physical laws, there's a certain density that reacts slowly to impulses. For instance, if you want to build a house, it will take considerable time from the inception of the idea of the new home to the moment you hold the keys in your hand. Before this, you will need planning permissions, architectural drawings, negotiations, cost estimates, official permits, potential headaches, and lots of patience since all of this takes a lot of time.

In many non-physical environments, however, the "make a wish" construction laws apply. The mere thought of a new house is enough to manifest it instantly. But it can also collapse just as quickly. Every intention has immediate consequences.

From my experience, each of our manifestations in the non-physical fades if we don't reinforce them with mental power. Yet, each of our intentions leaves subtle energy traces.

Even though it's difficult for me to ascertain how these intrusions appear to a non-physical being or what they cause, we should be mindful of all potential consequences and act responsibly.

An example from my own field of experience is the Park in Focus 27, the reception area of the afterlife. It has been created and is constantly being shaped by the thought power of billions of individual conscious entities.

I perceive this vibratory level as hyper-flexible and clearly recognize the immediate manifestation of intentions and thoughts.

There's a distinct order within this process. All inhabitants seem to possess a certain degree of maturity and mental clarity. Surprisingly, there's no hint of chaos, even though theoretically, a single individual with a flurry of haphazard manifestations could potentially disrupt the local society.

9 – A VISIT TO THE AFTERLIFE

“The eternal and the mortal world are not parallel, rather, they are fused.”
John O’Donohue, Irish Author and Poet

On October 6th, 2007, as colorful leaves swirled across the Monroe Institute*'s* parking lot, I retrieved my suitcase from Shaaron's car. I had taken a red-eye flight from Los Angeles just hours after concluding my tour guide season with a seventeen-day bus tour from Denver to San Francisco.

Exhaustion was evident on my face, but despite the sleepless night on a packed airplane, I surprisingly felt quite energetic.

Shaaron had graciously picked me up from the Charlottesville airport and treated me to brunch at her favorite restaurant before dropping me off at Monroe.

It had been three years since my last attendance at the *Heartline* program, and for some time, I had felt the urge to return to Virginia to recharge my paranormal batteries.

I had already postponed attending another course twice due to work commitments, and my resulting credit with the institute was about to expire. So, on a whim, I decided to book the *Lifeline* program, even though the course description hadn't entirely convinced me.

The week's primary subject matter was the exploration of Focus 23-27. While the idea of delving into otherworldly dimensions excited me, *Lifeline* went beyond mere exploration. The program involved the concept of service, teaching participants how to assist the deceased who may not immediately transition to Focus 27 but linger in various realms for different reasons.

I wasn't entirely sure if I was the right person for such a task, as I didn’t feel particularly drawn to such undertakings.

Robert Monroe, throughout his years of exploration, had numerous

encounters with the deceased and embarked on countless journeys into what the Western world commonly refers to as the afterlife.

He first visited Focus 27 in 1965, discovering a picturesque landscape with lush meadows, vibrant flowers, and towering trees, hence the name Park.

Initially, Monroe didn't feel the need to extensively explore this environment, as death didn't captivate his interest at that time. He found other areas more intriguing.

It was only when his wife Nancy was diagnosed with cancer over 20 years later that he felt compelled to revisit the Park. He was astonished by the remarkable discovery he had made nearly a quarter of a century earlier but had disregarded.

Monroe dedicated subsequent years to in-depth research on the Focus levels 23-27, summarizing his experiences and insights in a book titled “Ultimate Journey”.

In his writings, Monroe describes the emotional reunion he experienced in the afterlife with Nancy, his beloved wife who had succumbed to cancer and passed away in the summer of 1992.

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Even in the 21st century, death continues to be a taboo subject for many people. While discussions about life are embraced, conversations about death are often avoided or considered uncomfortable.

It is nearly ironic that mankind collectively avoids the one aspect of life which is inevitable.

For many individuals, their perception of the afterlife is shaped by the teachings of world religions. They seek guidance from religious organizations that provide them with dogmas and doctrines in the form of stories about heaven, hell, and Judgment Day.

Perhaps the idea of reaching one of these places in the vastness of the universe after death, without the option to return, instills fear.

Would people be less afraid of death if they knew that the afterlife is not drastically different from their present reality? What if they understood it as a vast amusement park with endless possibilities instead of the traditional notions of heaven and hell?

Years of traveling through different levels of consciousness have entirely transformed the image of the afterlife that was conveyed to me as a child by my Protestant family in northern Germany. I have pieced together my experiences and the collected information like parts of a jigsaw puzzle.

However, this puzzle remains far from complete—it continues to grow, and I can only begin to grasp its true extent as each answer and insight leads to new questions.

One thing I can state with absolute certainty is that the afterlife is not a distant place.

Our physical world and the “other side” are intricately intertwined, forming part of a complex matrix. Multiple intersecting levels exist within this overall structure.

How could it otherwise be possible to communicate with individuals in the afterlife?

From our limited human perspective, the reality of this matrix is inconceivable. However, we can approach its attributes through analogies.

I like to envision physical reality as the innermost circle in a set of concentric rings. The transitions between these rings can be likened to a permeable membrane that is easier to penetrate from the outside inward than the other way around.

Another analogy to illustrate the relationship between our everyday perception in physical reality and the perspective from the afterlife is that of a Venetian mirror, also known as a two-way mirror.

When we look into the mirror, we only see our reflection and the physical world. However, from the other side, the mirror appears as a transparent pane of glass that offers an unobstructed view of the world behind it.

But these boundaries I describe only exist within the confines of our everyday consciousness. Once we sharpen our senses, the apparent barriers fade away. The membranes become transparent from our perspective, and the mirror's surface transforms into clear glass.

Now, nothing prevents communication or encounters. When we allow our cognitive abilities to reach their full potential, a new perspective emerges. Death is not the end but a return to our original state of being.

However, as long as our awareness remains focused solely on physical reality, we navigate exclusively within the innermost circle of this model I

have described.

After we leave our physical bodies, the process of transition occurs. At this moment, we detach from our physical shell, and our consciousness refocuses, leading to the ultimate Out-of-Body Experience.

What happens next is greatly influenced by the belief systems we acquired during our physical lives as well as by the current state of mind we find ourselves in at the time of our passing.

Our personal experiences shape our path while we are alive, and they continue to shape the environment we encounter immediately after death.

For example, those who firmly believe in being welcomed by St. Peter at the gates of heaven are likely to experience exactly that.

They are in a resonance field that reflects their personal expectations. Although their perception of the environment may appear objective, it is subjective in this phase of their existence in the afterlife, based on the individual interpretation of their impressions.

Those who do not adhere to religious beliefs and believe in the finality of death may find themselves in a sort of vacuum after death. They remain there until an impulse prompts them to move on.

It is difficult to determine the duration of this state, as we exist outside the linear concept of time on Earth after transitioning.

Based on my personal experience, I presume that every human being has a soul that is part of a higher-level soul group or oversoul. The oversoul transmits impulses, often through spirit guides, to awaken the deceased from their relatively stagnant state.

This occurs in the interest of the evolutionary development of the oversoul, which aims to reintegrate all the individual parts into a whole.

Basically, the following applies to the newcomer to the afterlife: The stronger the connection to the Higher Self, the faster the expansion of consciousness.

I like to use the analogy that if the connection to the “server” is weak, the “computer” (the individual) can only download a limited amount of data from the internet. But with a fast and robust connection, the download can occur swiftly.

We can also send impulses to deceased people whose perception is limited, impaired, or tarnished after their transition, so their awareness can

expand, and their perception evolve.

To facilitate the process, Robert Monroe designed the *Lifeline* program, where participants can explore various aspects of the afterlife in a safe setting and provide support for the deceased. The aim is to serve both their own well-being and that of others.

When I arrived in Virginia, I had no expectations and was completely unprepared. However, at this stage, I knew that every Monroe program offered tremendous potential for personal development.

My only concern was that I might end up among a group of grieving individuals seeking to contact their deceased loved ones. But this concern quickly dissolved when I met the fourteen explorers from different parts of the world, each armed with a healthy sense of humor.

Despite their diverse backgrounds, including a medical student from Helsinki, a lawyer from Ohio, and a business coach from Florida, they all shared a common desire to catch a glimpse of the afterlife.

Right from the beginning, the mood among the participants was filled with positive energy, preventing any emotional heaviness.

Having arrived this time with no agenda of my own and no specific expectations, *Lifeline* turned out to be a game-changing experience for me.

My attitude towards Out-of-Body Experiences had significantly changed over the years. I now saw every experience as a gift, regardless of how it manifested.

I no longer felt frustrated when approaching an OBE. My newfound serenity benefited me in all aspects of my waking consciousness and during my explorations through diverse dimensions.

On the first evening, I had the pleasure of meeting Pamela from Florida. She was in her mid-fifties and had recently lost her husband to cancer. Despite this great tragedy, Pam displayed surprising balance and a zest for life.

As we conversed, we discovered commonalities that sparked engaging discussions. Pam worked as a business coach and consultant near Tampa, and we both wondered if *Lifeline* was the right program for us.

“I have no idea what this is truly about,” she admitted with a smile, relieved when I confessed to sharing the same uncertainty. Pam had a hunch

that our spirit guides may have played a role in leading us to choose this program.

The following morning, our trainers, Patty Ray Avalon and Lee Stone, prepared us for the course and the upcoming Hemi-Sync exercises.

Thanks to the positive group energy and the trainers' sensitivity, I quickly embraced the subject and the meditations despite my initial doubts.

To my surprise, I found natural and anxiety-free access to the targeted Focus levels beyond physical reality, even if my perceptions were initially vague and imprecise.

Consequently, I eagerly listened to the reports of other participants, some of whom had already received clear impressions and made contact with the deceased on the first day.

Throughout the week, Pam and I regularly met during breaks and meals. Over coffee, she casually mentioned that she had established a connection with her deceased husband.

“I didn’t really expect it, but I actually met John during the last meditation.”

“I’m delighted for you,” I replied.

However, Pam didn't seem entirely happy.

“It may sound a little strange, and of course, I’m very grateful to have met John, but I had hoped to see someone else, to be honest.”

Uncertain of how to respond, I began to ask a question, but our conversation was interrupted by another participant who was eager to share. I wished I could have known whom Pam had wanted to contact instead of her husband.

Later in the evening, a journey to Focus 27 was on the program, which is the place that Robert Monroe referred to as the Park. According to his description, this non-physical environment, among other things, encompasses a reception area for newcomers, a planning office, a coordination center, a comprehensive library, and a center for regeneration and healing.

With the intention to explore the healing center, I headed to my CHEC Unit that evening. Filled with trust and relaxation, I allowed the Hemi-Sync frequencies to carry me to the energy field of Focus 27.

Initially, I felt a distinct and uncomfortable pressure on my temples

which I attributed to the unfamiliar frequencies. It took a few minutes before I could disregard the pressure and fully focus on the exercise.

Apart from a bright fog, I couldn’t perceive a distinct environment at first. So I reinforced my intention to find the healing center and sought assistance from my team.

As soon as I mentally voiced my request, the image in my mind's eye began to clarify.

The following is an excerpt from my notes dating back to 2007:

I find myself standing in front of a glass door, which leads to a building bathed in a pleasant light. I hear voices around me, but I cannot attribute them to anyone in particular. The door opens at the moment I have the thought of wanting to pass through it.

Everywhere I look, there is an abundance of light. There are no shadows to be found.

It takes a moment for me to recognize contrasts in my surroundings.

I move purposefully toward a room at the far end of the corridor and pause in front of the open door. Intuitively, I perceive the room as a treatment room.

“Welcome!” a voice suddenly emerges from nowhere.

I cautiously reply with a greeting, not knowing with whom I am communicating.

In the room, I see a pale figure lying on a bed by the window, while a man with Asian features, whom I perceive as a physician, stands at the foot of the bed.

As a matter of course, he greets me and introduces himself as Dr. Phil. He kindly but firmly requests that I closely observe the treatment he is about to administer to his patient.

Dr. Phil crouches down and places his palms near the soles of the patient's feet without actually touching them. I distinctly sense a powerful energy flow emanating from the physician's hands, streaming into the patient's soles.

The entire room is illuminated, and moments later, the patient begins to move his arms and legs. The two men briefly converse, but I am unable to follow their words. Nonetheless, both appear pleased.

Dr. Phil turns to me and explains that the energy treatment was highly intense and rejuvenating for the patient.

Curious, I ask him if I can learn this type of treatment and apply it on the physical plane.

He responds, "No, a physical body would not withstand it, but I can teach you something that you can readily apply without hesitation."

He beckons me to take his place at the foot of the bed. Intuitively, I place my hands near the patient's feet, feeling a spiral of glowing energy flowing from my palms into the patient's body.

Dr. Phil nods approvingly and says, "Well done. Just like that."

The treatment concludes within seconds.

As I rise, I notice a second doctor in the room. He is a very tall man with striking blue eyes and thick black hair. He seems incredibly delighted about my presence.

"I am David," he introduces himself. "I am now employed here. You can tell her that. I'm doing well, and I love my work."

David exudes a contagious sense of happiness.

Curious, I inquire, "Whom am I supposed to tell?"

Without directly answering, he continues, "Here, we primarily treat new arrivals who were very ill or died in accidents."

David extends his hand to me, revealing a chunky gold ring adorned with an engraved coat of arms.

"She will recognize me through this. Send her my love and tell her that Dr. Dave feels fine and dandy."

Before I can respond, my perception becomes hazy, and darkness envelops me.

Upon returning to waking consciousness, I immediately reached for pen and paper.

The words "Dr. Dave feels fine and dandy" echoed in my mind. It all seemed so absurd. After jotting down my notes, I tried to make sense of what had transpired.

I knew it wasn't a dream, but what exactly was it?

During our group gathering, Pam, who was seated across from me, waved and smiled.

Uncertain if I had fantasized about everything, I mustered the courage to share my experience when the trainers inquired.

I spoke about Dr. Phil and the energy transfer he had allowed me to perform on his patient.

Hesitantly, I added, “And then there was another doctor who called himself Dr. Dave.”

After a brief pause, I concluded, “Dr. Dave feels fine and dandy.”

Pam struggled to suppress a sharp cry. She abruptly got up and rushed out of the room.

“I’ll be back in a minute!” her voice echoed seconds later from the stairs.

Pam was beside herself when she returned soon after, holding a photo in her hands. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the image of the blue-eyed man with black hair.

“That’s him. That’s Dr. Dave,” I exclaimed.

Tears welled up in Pam’s eyes.

“I know,” she sobbed. “He’s my brother. David was an oncologist. He died three years ago from a blood disorder. During our last phone conversation, he said: ‘Don’t worry, sister. Dr. Dave feels fine and dandy’.”

I was left speechless. David's words had deeply touched not just Pam, who had hoped for a sign from him, but also me, a total stranger whose worldview had been shaken by the experience.

When I shared with the group about the golden ring that David had shown me, silence enveloped the room. It was his fraternity ring, which he had worn until his passing and bequeathed to Pam in his will.

Now it was clear what encounter Pam had been longing for.

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Since the *Lifeline* program, I have visited the healing and regeneration center many times. Interestingly, the building takes on different forms during each visit. Sometimes it resembles a typical hospital, while at other times it appears more like a vacation resort.

The description of the healing center may sound like something that could exist in a similar form here on Earth.

However, I am aware that my perceptions are metaphorical. They

represent symbolic expressions of information that my brain receives and translates into a language or symbolism that I can comprehend. Without the use of metaphors, our limited human minds would struggle to categorize and integrate non-physical impressions.

I am particularly drawn to the healing center in Focus 27. Perhaps this is why my perceptions there are often more vivid and distinct compared to other locations.

Despite the ever-changing appearance of the building, I frequently encounter individuals I have met during previous visits. Dr. Phil is a prime example of this. Merely thinking of him instantly directs my focus toward him.

Over the years, Dr. Phil has answered many of my questions and assisted me in locating deceased individuals I sought within the healing center.

But why is there a need for a healing center in a realm where the physical body is no longer part of our existence?

Immediately after death, a person's spirit remains in a state similar to that before passing. The speed at which an individual's awareness adjusts to the new situation varies based on numerous factors.

From my understanding, there are individuals who continue to perceive their bodies after death. In cases where the body was afflicted by disease, or the cause of death was a severe injury, the person may still expect or require treatment or regeneration.

The same applies to individuals with mental illness, who undergo an adjustment period and are gently acquainted with their new circumstances.

According to my observations, the inhabitants of Focus 27 can choose their appearance freely. Some prefer to manifest in a human-like form, while others forgo it. Such fluidity is difficult for us to comprehend, but in Focus 27, it is entirely normal.

Every deceased person is welcomed in the Park according to their individual needs, taking into consideration their cultural and religious backgrounds. Consequently, the reception of an indigenous person from the Amazon rainforest would differ significantly from that of someone from Austria, Syria, or China.

The following excerpt from my records describes my initial visit to the

reception area:

After going through the preparatory process, it only takes seconds for me to feel the familiar state of Focus 10 distinctly. My body is asleep, while my mind is fully awake.

I can clearly perceive the gradual changes in the Hemi-Sync signals, causing my awareness of the physical surroundings to vanish completely.

At first, I see a warm, yellowish glow, followed by a clear and bright light. From an aerial perspective, I discern indistinct and hazy structures.

As the view becomes clearer, I realize that instead of the expected park with trees and meadows, there is a massive semicircular portal.

In front of it, there is a long line of check-in counters, resembling the organized entrance to an amusement park.

The queues of people waiting seem endless, yet there is an air of calmness without any sign of impatience.

As I fly briefly over the heads of the new arrivals towards the entrance, one man in the crowd points at me and exclaims, "Hey! You're not dead. How did you get here?"

I am taken aback and feel exposed. Without answering him, I swiftly distance myself from the crowd and pass through the check-in area at a safe height.

Beneath me, a huge park area opens up where people are reuniting and embracing each other with joy. I notice children, cats, and dogs among them. While I would love to approach a group, I don't want to interrupt their blissful reunion, so I keep my distance.

Overwhelmed by the multitude of impressions, I leave the Park and feel the need to record my experience. I ask my spirit guides to accompany me and inquire if everyone is welcomed by their loved ones after they pass away.

In response, my team transmits a thought ball—a particular form of telepathic communication that instantly conveys complex knowledge.

The contents of the thought ball are precise: In Focus 27, we are welcomed by those who are spiritually aligned with us and on the same evolutionary path. Typically, these individuals are our relatives and friends. However, they can also be religious figures or angels that the deceased identified with during their lifetime.

Regardless, the purpose of the greeting ceremony is to facilitate the

transition from the physical to the non-physical realm for all who return home.

Just like the healing center, I also perceive the immediate reception area in Focus 27 differently on each visit. It is, however, interesting that the area behind the check-in is always a park.

During the *Lifeline* program, nearly everyone in the group shared this observation.

After we had visited the Park several times, the trainers prepared us for a special task.

“This will be your first opportunity to accompany individuals from Focus 23 to Focus 27,” Lee explained. “These are people who didn’t directly go to the Park after they passed but are lingering in an in-between or transitional level.”

The idea is to support individuals in their evolutionary process by paving the way out of Focus 23 to the Park for them. Robert Monroe referred to this process as soul retrieval.

I simply couldn’t imagine how this works. I also seriously questioned if I, of all people, would be the right person for the job.

10 – RETURNING HOME BY DETOUR

“All things are ready, if our mind be so.”
William Shakespeare, English Poet, and Playwright

In Focus 23 reside those who have transitioned to the afterlife with clouded consciousness and consequently limited perceptual abilities. The causes for this condition can be diverse and multifaceted.

Expectations and beliefs held during their physical life may contribute to this state as well as personal attachments to earthly life. But it can also be a consequence of sudden or unexpected death. The circumstances surrounding their transition can impact their ability to fully understand and perceive their new non-physical reality.

Some individuals in Focus 23 deny their death and try to continue participating in earthly affairs for various reasons, such as unresolved matters or a reluctance to separate from familiar energy forms.

Those struggling with addictions may also remain in Focus 23 as they seek resonance with the familiar stimulation they experienced in their physical lives.

However, there are also individuals who voluntarily linger in this in-between level because they don't want to leave grieving loved ones behind. Often, the newly transitioned are held back by the intense suffering of those in the physical world.

In many cases, their spirit guides are unable to reach them due to incompatible vibrational frequencies.

From our vantage point, we have a greater chance of attracting their attention because we are rooted in the physical and, thus, closer to their vibrational frequency.

The process of assisting lost souls follows a simple protocol: First, I ask my spirit team to take me where I am most needed. Once I perceive an individual, I attempt to establish contact and initiate communication in the

next step.

Creative approaches are required because the individuals involved usually have limited perceptual abilities. Once contact is established, I strive to gain the trust of the person and gently convey to them that their transition from the physical to the non-physical world has already occurred, and their loved ones are waiting for them elsewhere.

During the conversation, I often sense the presence of one or more entities ready to accompany the individual to the Park. Sometimes, I guide them there myself. At the entrance to the Park, the spirit guides are always present to take over.

The duration of a retrieval varies, ranging from seconds to several minutes, and there are instances where it may not be successful due to a lack of readiness, trust, or denial from the individual in Focus 23.

The trainers at *Lifeline* encouraged us to gather as much information as possible about the deceased individuals as soon as the contact is stable enough, and providing the situation allows for such action. This information, including names, nationalities, details of their death, and other relevant facts, can later be used to verify the experience.

As I prepared myself mentally for the journey, I could feel the weight of responsibility. Lying in my CHEC Unit, I wondered if I would be able to find someone who needed or wanted my assistance. In theory, everything Patty and Lee had explained sounded plausible and easy. But what if I made a mistake?

It soon turned out that my concerns proved unfounded as I quickly encountered a visual impression upon entering the energy field of Focus 23. Before I quote the description of what happened from my journal, I would once again like to point out that I changed the names and locations in these notes out of respect for the families and loved ones of those I met.

I float weightlessly through a vacuum space whose structure appears unfamiliar and can hardly be described in words. I feel neither density nor resistance. I have absolutely no sense of temperature.

It is dark around me, yet I have the impression of being able to see. At first, only vague shapes, but then suddenly, everything becomes very clear.

Right in front of me, I perceive the form of an older woman. She stands in her kitchen at the stove, absentmindedly stirring a pot with a wooden spoon.

First clockwise, then counterclockwise. She repeatedly wipes her forehead with the sleeve of her apron.

The woman appears exhausted, her calves bandaged and her well-worn shoes flat.

The kitchen furniture evokes memories of my grandmother's time—bright wooden kitchen cabinets and a gray-mottled countertop. The gas stove looks antique, and the sink is made of tin. The smell of cooked beans with bacon fills the air.

Approaching the old woman, I position myself at her right side. Absorbed in her task, she remains oblivious to my presence.

"Hello," I say softly, cautious not to startle her.

However, she doesn't react. As she tastes the food from the wooden spoon, her hands tremble, and her pale, wrinkled face wears a weary expression. Placing the spoon back into the pot, she turns around and locks eyes with me, causing me to hold my breath.

I step back, startled, as she suddenly moves to the right to open a drawer.

I look down at myself and realize in amazement that I am hovering just above the floor. What is happening here?

I become disoriented momentarily, surrounded by haziness. Then, a distant foghorn sounds, and Robert Monroe's quiet voice echoes in my ear, reminding me of my intention and purpose.

The image of the old woman comes into focus once again, prompting me to find a way to capture her attention.

"Hello!" I assert, with increased determination and volume.

Still, there is no reaction. Deciding to make a bold move, I concentrate my energy on the stove, intending to raise the gas flame.

Shouting as loudly as I can, I exclaim, "Hello, Mrs...."

The gas flame flares up.

Startled, the old woman whispers, "Salm. Else... Salm."

Her voice sounds fragile.

I'm astonished by the clarity with which I hear her.

She adjusts the gas back down.

Curious about my presence, she asks, "Who are you? And how did you get into my apartment?"

In response, I offer, "The front door was open, and the aroma of bean stew was enticing."

It's the best reply I can think of.

Our eyes meet.

“My name is Oliver,” I introduce myself. “Oliver Tappe.”

“Do we know each other?”

“We don’t,” I admit truthfully. “I’m new to the area.”

“New in Frankfurt?”

“You could say that. I’ve just arrived. What year is it?”

Confusion appears on her face as she replies, “1976. But why do you ask?”

Feeling anxious, I shrug my shoulders. At this early stage, I can’t tell Else Salm why I asked that question.

“Have you seen my husband?” she enquires.

Before I can answer her, she puts the wooden spoon into the sink, wipes her hands on her smock, and turns to face me.

“He's just not coming home,” she laments. “I've been waiting and waiting, but he’s not returning. I don't understand. Lunch has been ready for a while. I stand here, stirring the stew to prevent it from burning. Where can he be?”

She gazes at me with concern, questioning whether something may have happened to him.

Delicately, I try to determine the best approach, aiming to earn her trust.

“Mrs. Salm, I know where your husband is. I can take you to him,” I assert, startled by how effortlessly the words leave my mouth.

How could I possibly know where her husband is? Yet, I cannot let her sense my uncertainty, so I extend my hand to her.

“Come with me,” I urge.

She hesitates, unsure.

Encouragingly, I smile, and after a moment's pause, the old lady decides to follow me.

However, she suddenly exclaims, “Wait a minute! The stove! I must turn it off.”

Before she can turn away from me, the scene around us shifts abruptly, and we find ourselves standing at the bottom of a magnificent staircase. The grandeur of the wide steps reminds me of the foyer of an old opera house.

Without warning, a male figure appears at the top of the stairs, though his face remains hidden from view. Soon, he stands before us, extending his hand to Mrs. Salm.

Mesmerized, I watch as she accepts his invitation. As their hands touch,

the entire backdrop vanishes, and I am once again back in the airless space from before. Within seconds, I open my physical eyes.

Who was that figure? A spirit guide, maybe? Or perhaps even her husband?

And who was Else Salm from Frankfurt anyway? Why did I end up in her kitchen of all places?

So many questions go through my head. None of them can be answered quickly.

I replayed the experience in my mind, and I realized that at the beginning of the episode, I had not perceived any colors. Everything was in black and white until the moment when the grand staircase opened up.

I still don't know the reason for this, but over time I have noticed that similar phenomena occur again and again. My perception of color does not begin until the end of the experience.

Many of the other participants also had impressive experiences during the meditation and brought back very detailed information.

Nonetheless, my inner skeptic was working overtime. It would only be at peace once my gathered data passed verification. I needed confirmation that Else Salm had indeed lived and passed away in Frankfurt in 1976.

As a former journalist, I later contacted the local registration office. A pleasant and extremely helpful employee checked the files and did, in fact, find an entry about the woman’s death. Her name, the location, and the year of her death matched. My perception hadn’t deceived me.

What initially irritated me was the fact that Mrs. Salm had been continually stirring her stew in Focus 23 since 1976. The idea that something similar could happen to me at some stage began to worry me. Who in their right mind would want to stir the same pot for 31 years?

During later retrievals, I assisted individuals whose physical lifetimes dated back even further.

This may sound alarming from our perspective. But the timespan is irrelevant as Focus 23 is beyond physical reality and, therefore, outside our linear earthly time. Mrs. Salm didn’t have any sense of time and didn’t feel trapped either.

My concern was based solely on the projection of earthly laws onto Mrs. Salm's non-physical kitchen. From a physical point of view, it would also be incomprehensible why the stew was still spreading its aroma after 31 years

on the stove.

Overall, relatively few individuals linger in Focus 23. Most people's consciousness is lucid after their transition, and they go straight to the Park assisted by their spirit team.

Apart from Focus 23, Bob Monroe defined three further levels: Focus 24, 25, and 26. According to him, these environments are occupied by individuals who, while still alive, adopted and internalized strict and specific believe systems regarding their existence after their physical demise.

These include religious groups, indigenous peoples, and individuals caught up in their own beliefs and expectations.

I have made only a few excursions into these planes because I got the impression that intruders were not welcome.

My perception is that the inhabitants feel generally well taken care of. Their evolution has apparently come to a standstill. Only when they become aware of their situation do they turn to their spirit guides and move on.

A sense of time doesn't exist on these levels either. Although from my earthly perspective, it may seem as if these individuals stayed for decades on an in-between level, such temporal contexts do not exist for them.

Personally, I prefer working in Focus 23 as it offers the opportunity to collect verifiable data. I have trusted the process for a long time now, but it is still reassuring to receive additional confirmation.

The following case from the year 2016 particularly touched me and occupied my thoughts for a long time. During a workshop at the Monroe Institute, I had intended to visit the Park in Focus 27, but my spirit team had other plans for me.

I had barely finished my resonant tuning process and mentally voiced my affirmation when I was suddenly transported to an unfamiliar location. As I do in every exercise, I made every effort to perceive and memorize as many details as possible.

I am standing on a grass and tree-lined country road with the wreck of a passenger car diagonally in front of me. About 60 feet away from the car, I perceive a ten to twelve-year-old boy surrounded by a foggy beam of light. As I move towards him, I intuitively know that he didn't survive the accident.

"What's your name?" I ask him.

The boy looks at me in surprise.

“Chris,” he replies.

I repeat the question to ensure that I heard him correctly.

“Christopher,” he says this time.

He seems apathetic, neither doing well nor badly. He’s simply standing there. Even my presence, which he obviously perceives, apparently doesn’t surprise him.

I try to look inside the car wreck, but I can't. Yet I intuitively know that at least another two, if not three, people were involved in the accident, including more children.

In my mind, five letters form a surname. I set an anchor for myself to remember the full name later when I return to waking consciousness.

When I turn around to face the boy again, the scene around me briefly changes, and as if in a kind of playback, I see the entire sequence of the accident from the perspective of a bystander: A truck skids and blocks the road. The car Christopher is in speeds toward the truck, slams into it, overturns, and lands on its roof on the side of the road.

I manage to stay calm despite the dramatic images. The scene of the accident fades, and I turn back to the boy. I ask him what year it is and telepathically receive a clear reply.

I invite Christopher to follow me. When I extend my hand to him, he lets me know that he's unable to walk.

I decide to carry him and ask my spirit team to guide us to Focus 27. The scene changes as soon as I hold the boy in my arms, and we float through a cosmic vortex.

Once my perception becomes more distinct again, I recognize a large fun fair with wooden stalls leading to a Ferris wheel.

At this very moment, I hear the speaker’s voice of the exercise from a distance:

“It is now time to return. Express your gratitude to those who accompanied and supported you on your mission.”

I put Christopher down on the ground. He seems far more relaxed now and even smiles. There’s hardly time to say goodbye as the Hemi-Sync signals take me back to waking consciousness.

I try to resist them, but I’m too excited to keep focused. Seconds later, I open my eyes.

I didn’t waste any time and picked up my cell phone right away. My perceptions had been clear, and I also had enough information to do some research. My heart was pounding as I Googled Christopher, the surname, and the year I had been given.

Moments later, I was reading an article by a local TV station about a car accident in which Christopher, his brother, and his father had lost their lives.

The surname and the year were correct, as well as the description of the accident, as I had perceived it in Focus 23.

At the time, Christopher and his family had been on their way from a sports event to the fun fair. More than likely, Christopher had been looking forward to the carnival and had high expectations.

This explained why the two of us headed for the Ferris wheel after I’d picked him up. My intention had been to take him to Focus 27, but for Christopher, the reception area was a fun fair.

Christopher's touching fate kept haunting me. I wondered daily what had become of the little boy. Although I had left him in Focus 27 with the best intentions, I had not perceived anyone who had taken care of him.

A few days after returning home from the Monroe Institute, I decided to look for the boy again. I couldn’t rest until I was sure that he wasn’t alone.

I had just reached the energy field of Focus 27 when I got a surprise. Another boy, who introduced himself as Christopher’s brother Nick, approached me to express his gratitude.

I was deeply touched. And then I saw Christopher as well. He was smiling contentedly. Now I knew for certain that he was definitely in the right place.

As I've already mentioned, most people are welcomed by their loved ones in the Park soon after their transition. Why Christopher’s consciousness had been anchored elsewhere for a number of years is incomprehensible in retrospect, and perhaps it is not even relevant in the bigger picture. He had not suffered, nor was he aware of a long period of time spent in Focus 23.

In the same way that I reunited with Christopher in Focus 27, anyone can learn to project their consciousness into the Park to spend time with friends or loved ones there.

However, Individuals from the afterlife can also meet us part of the way. Once they lower their vibrational frequency, we can recognize them in a state

of expanded awareness. Our perception of them is accordingly subtle. We get the impression of a presence and, for example, sense, feel, or smell the deceased.

Such phenomena are a sign that there's an open communication channel. With a little practice, a stable flow of information can be established from these kinds of situations.

So, there are various ways of making contact, similar to using different apps to communicate with each other in our physical reality.

With the transition from physical to non-physical existence, our energetic vibration changes. We adapt to new environments, which have a much lower density than the physical plane.

Therefore, it is incredibly challenging for the deceased to make themselves physically noticeable to us because of their subtle nature. Yet there are frequent cases where they manipulate matter or electromagnetic waves or even manifest themselves three-dimensionally to give us signs.

To my surprise, it became increasingly apparent during the *Lifeline* program that I could easily establish contact with the inhabitants on the other side even back then.

One specific exercise aimed at gathering as much detailed information as possible about a total stranger.

Each participant in the course wrote the first and last name of a deceased person from their family or circle of acquaintances on a piece of paper and placed it in a bowl. By drawing lots, we then received our subject for the upcoming meditation.

I drew the name Bobby Degman and didn't even know if the individual was male or female.

The trainers had shown us various approaches to solve the task as successfully as possible.

Following the preparatory process, I allowed myself to be guided to Focus 27 by the Hemi-Sync frequencies, of course not without asking for support from my team beforehand through an affirmation.

I'm moving through a milky light and losing any sense of space. Nothing is happening, and I'm about to give up and think about returning to waking consciousness.

But then, I start to discern faint contrasts in the fog. In the distance, I see

a large, circular building.

As I get closer, I realize that the sides of the building are open, with no doors or windows. I land directly beside a counter that serves as a kind of reception. I find myself alone in the huge hall.

I shout, “Are you here, Bobby?”

There's no response.

I try again, “Bobby Degman, please talk to me!”

Still, no reply. That's when I notice a service bell on the counter and ring it twice. The sound of the bell echoes through the hall.

Suddenly, as if out of nowhere, a young woman in a dark uniform appears in front of me.

“I’m looking for someone called Bobby Degman.”

The lady pauses for a few seconds. She appears to be contemplating intently.

“Bobby can’t be contacted at the moment,” she says distantly. “Is there anything else I can do for you?”

My mind threatens to take over. The situation is simply too absurd. The reception, the indifferent woman, the large hall …

So I ask, “Could you perhaps provide me with some information about Bobby?”

She looks upward, and at that very moment, I receive various images that do not seem to have any particular connection to each other.

First, I see a typical bungalow with an open-plan kitchen and a spacious living area with white French doors leading to a large patio.

Then, an image of a fenced swimming pool in a relatively small garden appears to me. It is followed by the image of light blue children's shoes lying on a lawn next to the pool.

Inside the house, I perceive a young couple. The woman is standing in the kitchen, and as she opens one of the wall cabinets, numerous small colorful plastic balls come flying out towards her. There are more and more of them, and it seems like the kitchen and the woman are about to be engulfed by the balls.

Before everything around me vanishes in the misty light again, I notice a red toy tractor in the front yard of the house.

I linger in the light and imprint the images in my mind, trying to prevent them from slipping away on the way back to waking consciousness.

Following the meditation, I carefully recorded a list of my perceptions, as Patty and Lee had instructed us not to interpret or distort any of the information we received.

“Just because it doesn’t make any sense to you doesn’t mean that the information is not important for someone else,” Patty had explained.

I strictly focused on the few images that I could consciously remember.

It turned out that Bobby Degman was the nephew of Brenda, an elderly participant from Minnesota. My notes deeply touched her.

“Bobby drowned in his parents' pool when he was two years old in 1973,” Brenda tearfully recounted to me.

Apparently, the boy’s father had forgotten to close the gate to the pool and had left him unattended for a few moments while preparing dinner. Brenda's brother never forgave himself for that fatal mistake.

The little boy had loved the colorful plastic balls the family kept in a large net in a storeroom. The tractor I had perceived had also been one of Bobby’s favorite toys.

Although I never met little Bobby in Focus 27, I had brought back reliable information, and I was extremely satisfied with the result.

Communication with the departed is only possible if both sides are open to it. Loved ones often have a strong desire to contact us after their transition and will seize any opportunity to do so.

Sometimes they simply want us to know that they're okay, while other times they may have specific objectives, like seeking forgiveness or expressing their love for those they left behind.

However, there are situations where a deceased individual may not want any contact, reflecting their reluctance during their lifetime.

By the way, I’m often asked if I can communicate with Michael Jackson or other celebrities in the afterlife. But why would Michael Jackson talk to me after he died if we didn't have a personal relationship during his life?

However, if someone close to Michael Jackson, such as a member of his immediate family or entourage, were to request a medium to act as an intermediary, then an energetic connection would be established, and more than likely, communication could be made.

A crucial factor that can determine success or failure in attempting contact is our own emotional state. Oppressive emotions such as grief,

despair, anger, or fear resonate at a very low frequency, making clear perceptions difficult or even impossible.

On the other hand, positive emotions, especially joy, love, and gratitude, create harmony and are very beneficial in establishing contact, as they are much closer to the frequency range of the deceased.

11 – DISCOVERIES AND INSIGHTS IN FOCUS 27

"Seeing death as the end of life is like seeing the horizon as the end of the ocean."
David "Doc" Searls, American Author

Participating in the *Lifeline* program considerably enriched my life and gave it a new direction. After the program, I was well able to integrate what I'd learned and continue to apply my newly acquired skills.

I soon noticed that I could easily access Focus 27 even without the corresponding Hemi-Sync signals. Of all the consciousness levels I had experienced thus far, I found myself most drawn to this region.

The Park has become a place I regularly visit in my meditations.

Over the following years, I attended the *Exploration 27* program several times. This program allows for a more in-depth exploration of the Park's various regions. Participants investigate the different facilities both individually and as a group, gathering pertinent data.

The collective expeditions are particularly thrilling because everyone's experiences can be compared afterward. It never ceased to astound me how many details overlapped, despite everyone meditating individually in their CHEC Units.

Following my initial group experience in Focus 27, I discussed the outcomes with my fellow astral traveler Mara. Over the years, she had evolved into a close friend and mentor, consistently offering valuable insights when I reached my own boundaries.

Mara believed that I was now ready for advanced exploration. She proposed to investigate an aspect of my soul I hadn't been aware of before.

What did she mean? During one of her Out-of-Body Experiences, Mara had met an aspect of my greater Self in Focus 27. Initially, her narrative sounded like science fiction to me. She vaguely described this part of me as regularly participating in an activity that somewhat paralleled what I was

doing in my physical life.

It all sounded a little cryptic, but Mara had a plan. She proposed to lead me to this part of my soul during a joint OBE in Focus 27.

This excursion would be the first of many journeys into non-physical environments as a team.

The concept of meeting an unfamiliar aspect of my greater Self or my soul was hard for me to grasp. It provided ample food for thought.

My anticipation heightened as the scheduled day drew closer. We agreed to convene at the Park's entrance at eight in the evening.

I'm having trouble relaxing. It's not working on demand today. I'm doing a breathing exercise from yoga. Finally, my mind is calming down. Hopefully not too late—is Mara already at the agreed-upon location, waiting?

I let the sound frequencies carry me, visualizing the tunnel I've flown through so often to reinforce my intention.

Click-out.

When I regain consciousness, I find myself in a forest clearing. It takes a moment to remember my purpose—Mara!

I need to find Mara. As soon as this thought crosses my mind, the scene changes, and I am suddenly standing by a small body of water.

"I'm glad you made it."

Although the energy behind those words comes from Mara, the figure beside me resembles a giant elf.

"Don't let my appearance irritate you. You also seem different to me than how you perceive yourself.

Evidently, this being can read my thoughts.

"Take my hand," it says.

"How do I know that it's you, Mara?"

Instead of responding, the elf-like figure seizes my arm. I feel restless and anxious.

"Maintain your focus," the entity says sternly.

Within seconds, we're soaring above the water, crossing meadows and treetops towards a large building complex in the heart of the landscape.

I consciously close my mental eyes as we are heading straight toward a rooftop. (Note: Some processes during an OBE may seem irrational to my mind, causing me to snap back to waking consciousness at times. When my thought process starts to become active, I initiate a brief blackout.)

Upon landing, I no longer perceive the elf-like being beside me but Mara in her actual form.

“Where are we?” I ask.

In front of me, there is a long corridor with doors, and behind me, there is a staircase. I have an almost perfect 360-degree view.

Alongside each door is a floor-to-ceiling window several feet wide.

“This is an educational facility,” Mara explains as she points at one of the windows. “Take a look inside.”

To me, the room resembles a classroom from the ‘70s. Approximately 40 entities sit at paired desks, listening to a teacher slowly pacing between the rows.

It's only when I fully focus on the man that I recognize him. I'm taken aback.

“That’s me!”

“Well spotted,” Mara laughs.

“What am I doing?” I ask.

“You can refocus your awareness and adopt his, or rather your other, perspective.”

I heed her advice and suddenly find myself speaking, though I can't comprehend my own words. Simultaneously, I see Mara and myself standing behind the window.

My consciousness abruptly snaps back.

“I am a teacher?” I ask, surprised.

“The students in your classroom are new arrivals. You are preparing them for their new opportunities in Focus 27.”

I sense my focus threatening to fade.

“Let's go back,” Mara suggests, reaching for my arm again.

The return to waking consciousness is gradual but seamless.

The Hemi-Sync recording was still playing when I removed my headphones. It took me a significant amount of time to fully reconnect with my physical body and to document my experience.

I chose not to call Mara that evening, as I wanted to fully process and internalize what had happened before my perception might potentially be influenced by hers.

A surprise awaited me the following day.

“When did you initiate your OBE?” Mara inquired.

“At eight in the evening, as we agreed. Why do you ask?”

“I also began at eight, but eight my time. It was only six o'clock your time.”

I gasped. I hadn't considered the time difference between California and Colorado when planning our journey.

“Time is irrelevant in Focus 27,” Mara informed me. “By the way, I also work at the education center we visited. We are effectively colleagues.”

It was an unbelievable experience the mind finds challenging to comprehend. Mara and I had shared an OBE. We perceived each other as “travel companions”, despite embarking on our individual journeys at separate times.

We decided to explore this phenomenon further and arranged regular joint trips to examine our “discovery” in more depth.

Our hypothesis: A specific, aligned intention can result in a shared experience in the non-physical, even if each of us independently decides the timing of our OBE.

Instead of agreeing on a specific day and time, we merely specified a rough time frame of approximately one week. Regardless of the exact day we each selected, we encountered each other multiple times at the agreed-upon locations.

However, not every journey or meeting was successful. In some instances, our perceptions didn't align. Yet, just as many of our experiences confirmed that time is indeed an illusion—at least in non-physical realms.

How else could encounters like these occur?

My travels with Mara imparted an important revelation: Humans are multidimensional beings. I now consider that we exist concurrently in various dimensions. In addition to incarnations on other levels, this might also include so-called reincarnations on Earth.

What we usually refer to as reincarnation is predicated on our limited linear human understanding. I find it more plausible to conceive of reincarnation within a parallel and/or overlapping frame of reference.

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Every stay in Focus 27 has helped me to regard death and dying from a new and anxiety-free perspective.

Of course, there are times when I wonder what dying might feel like.

Some fears can't be easily dismissed. They serve as survival mechanisms in our physical reality, like fear of falling or abrupt, loud noises.

I also experience discomfort when a plane encounters turbulence or when another earthquake rattles Los Angeles. A common fear many of us share is that of an agonizing death.

However, the insights I've received from my spirit team and other intelligent beings on the other side are incredibly comforting.

From their perspective, the awareness of most individuals undergoing what we perceive as a horrific death has already shifted to a non-physical environment at the moment of trauma. In other words, the soul departs the body before the shock is fully felt.

There is no reason for the soul to endure a traumatic transition. This also explains why several of the deceased I have been in contact with have no distinct memory of their passing.

Some didn't even comprehend what had occurred until it was explained to them post-transition or revealed during a life review.

This isn't to suggest that the soul always opts for the path of least resistance. Certain elements of the dying process are an integral part of our earthly incarnation and are consciously experienced—insofar as these elements contribute to or are essential for our growth.

This may include enduring a challenging death.

The thought of having to leave our dear Earth behind when we die fuels numerous fears in most people. In my perspective, these fears are baseless. During the dying process, our consciousness is liberated from the confines of our physical condition, leading to an expansion of our perception.

Dying isn't a shift to another location but rather a transformation.

Even though our energetic density changes after our physical passing, we are still ourselves. And this is precisely how we perceive ourselves post-transition—inclusive of all the experiences gathered during our lifetime.

Without the physical body, we suddenly have the freedom to assume any form that pleases us. Departed individuals often choose to visually present themselves as younger than they were at the time of their passing, especially those who had lived to a ripe old age on Earth.

Being freed from the constraints of physical laws provides us with the ability to lead a completely different existence. However, this doesn't

necessarily imply that we disregard Earth after our transition.

From my understanding, four different scenarios can manifest after death:

1. Our awareness remains focused on the physical environment. In that case, we linger in one of the in-between levels until we are reached by impulses that trigger an expansion of consciousness, much like in Mrs. Salm's case.
2. Our awareness entirely shifts to the realm of the afterlife, leading to a loss of interest in the physical world.
3. The focus of our awareness oscillates between the physical and non-physical environments until we are ready to let go fully.
4. We undergo an expansion of our awareness that enables us to perceive and maintain focus across multiple dimensions simultaneously.

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The question about the fate of people who are considered evil or bad in our society has been bothering me for quite some time, and I am frequently asked about it. What happens to murderers, rapists, or terrorists in the afterlife? Do their actions have consequences? Do they end up in some kind of hell?

Upon leaving the physical body and the corresponding shift in perspective, each person comes to understand what they have inflicted upon others.

However, there is no judgment or punishment in the afterlife. The dominant form of energy is unconditional love. Though, there are beings who initially cannot recognize or accept this love.

Throughout my years of exploration, I've yet to encounter a realm I could label as hell in the traditional sense. But I do occasionally meet individuals who, after their passing, find themselves ensnared in their own anguish. They are unable to see the light, and they are not open to receive the energy of love.

They repeatedly experience the pain they caused to others. From my viewpoint, this resembles a personal hell. Those individuals would most likely be located in what Monroe defined as Focus 26.

I hesitate to speculate how long such individuals remain in this state, and

I'm uncertain about how—or if—they can receive assistance from our realm.

It's worth noting that not everyone who has committed a crime or transgression automatically descends into this “personal purgatory.” Two circumstances come into play here.

First, a crime may have been part of the life plan for the individuals involved. This implies that the victim and perpetrator made a pre-incarnation agreement to experience certain events.

While this may seem harsh, it can be vitally important for an individual's evolutionary process. Enduring painful experiences often spurs significant growth in people.

Second, some “wrongdoings” occur without deliberate intent. This category includes individuals suffering from psychological disorders, those under the influence, or those manipulated externally.

After their transition, these individuals typically undergo an instant rehabilitation facilitated by their own expanded consciousness. In a dimension dictated by unconditional love, there's no space for thoughts of revenge, hatred, and other negative emotions. This realm is about learning from experiences for one’s own good and for the highest good of all.

Ideally, we learn during our lifetime from the positive and negative experiences which will shape our future existence. The self-realization of a person who has made mistakes is already part of the rehabilitation process. Those who are aware of their wrongdoings and subsequently change their intentions and aims evolve enormously, thus serving the whole of creation as well.

However, due to our subjective perception, we're not always aware of the impact our actions and decisions have on our surroundings.

After our transition, we get the opportunity to review the just-finished incarnation and to look at it from different perspectives.

The Life Review is a complex, multi-dimensional process. We become the audience of the blockbuster that was our life and are given the chance to experience certain situations again consciously.

This occurs in parallel from our own perspective as well as that of all those involved. In this way, we become aware of the full extent of our decisions and actions.

It's essential to understand that the life review happens in an environment

of loving support. This moment of our evolution is not a “Day of Judgment.” There is no condemnation or punishment. The review serves as a learning process, promoting our further growth and development.

We are not alone during this phase. Our spirit guides accompany and support us with compassion.

This also applies to individuals who have chosen their own death. From the afterlife's perspective, suicide is not a tragedy or crime, and hence, it is not met with punishment.

Those who ended their own lives are welcomed into the Park with as much love as anyone else. The person's mental state at the time of their suicide dictates the subsequent events.

Often, suicide is followed by a regeneration phase at the healing center in Focus 27 because those affected have typically been subjected to psychological stress long before their death, leading to impaired consciousness.

My personal interest in this topic was sparked by an unusual experience I had during a weekend retreat I was holding several years ago. It was particularly odd because this was my own Afterlife Workshop, where exploring the beyond was the main theme.

During a Hemi-Sync meditation late in the morning, I suddenly began having trouble breathing, accompanied by a strong urge to cough that I couldn't suppress. One by one, other participants started coughing as well.

Unable to continue with the exercise, we took an unscheduled coffee break. None of us could explain the strange phenomenon.

As planned, I left the event location on the top floor of a residential building in the early evening and headed home.

About half an hour later, my cell phone rang. It was the workshop’s organizer.

“Oliver, I’ve got to talk to you.”

I took the next highway exit and pulled into a parking lot.

What I learned on the phone made me shudder.

A woman named Stephanie had taken her own life in an apartment beneath our venue just before noon, coinciding with our meditation. I don't want to go into the specifics of her passing, but I immediately understood what had prompted our collective coughing fit.

During the exercise, our awareness greatly expanded, making us

particularly receptive to various impulses, even those beyond our intention.

I instantly questioned if our meditation could have somehow contributed to Stephanie's suicide and if I could have been partially responsible for her death. Had our focus on the afterlife perhaps created an energetic field resonating with her intention?

The guilt weighed on me, justified or not, to the point where I even considered removing the afterlife exploration workshop from my agenda all together.

About a week later, I decided to look for Stephanie. I needed clarity. It was also important for me to know if she had reached the Park or if she was lingering in one of the in-between levels.

My plan was to head to the healing center in Focus 27 and seek Dr. Phil's assistance. In my heightened state of agitation, it took three attempts before I was finally able to perceive the center clearly. To my surprise, Dr. Phil was already waiting at the reception. This time, it had a futuristic appearance.

The doctor greeted me warmly and immediately led me in. There was no need for me to inquire about Stephanie. He was clearly aware of my situation.

My nerves heightened as he opened one of the many doors lining a seemingly infinite corridor and guided me into a room.

Stephanie had never met me before. How would she react to my visit?

The light-filled room reminded me of a luxurious hotel suite. The expansive, floor-to-ceiling windows offered views of a lush, tropical garden.

Stephanie was sitting upright on her bed, a smile on her face. Her strawberry-blonde hair radiated in the sunlight.

“Step a little closer,” she encouraged me, waving. “Dr. Phil has already told me quite a bit about you.”

Our communication was telepathic.

Stephanie explained that she had been brought to the healing center shortly after her arrival. Before that, she was overjoyed to be greeted by some friends and family members.

On that day, my perception was extremely stable, and I would have loved to ask her tons of questions.

“I know why you're here,” she conveyed. “You don't need to feel guilty. My decision to end my life was made long before your workshop took place.”

Her words offered immense relief.

“But why did you want to die?” I asked, surprised at my own forwardness.

Stephanie's response was, “I just couldn't stand being in my body anymore. It simply became unbearable. I had to get out of there.”

I reflected on the resonance and significance of her words and remained silently beside her.

Her explanation, as brief as it seemed, carried a very special energy, and I suddenly deeply understood her situation. I felt a profound sense of compassion.

There was nothing more to be said.

“You are more than welcome to visit me again if you like,” Stephanie said. “Any time you wish.”

I nodded, acknowledging that I would accept her offer.

Before I was able to express my gratitude to both Stephanie and Dr. Phil, my perception rapidly faded, and I had no choice but to return to waking consciousness.

Over the following months, I visited Stephanie several times, and to this day, I’m appreciative of her friendly and open way of communicating with me.

Nobody takes their own life without a reason. But it's only after their transition, when their consciousness regains clarity, that they fully realize the impact their suicide has on their loved ones and broader social circles.

Moreover, these individuals often have an intensified desire to communicate. They certainly don't want their loved ones to endure suffering or potential guilt on their account.

I personally know several people who have chosen to exit life prematurely. Their reasons varied greatly and were deeply personal. However, they all shared one thing: They all did their best while they were alive, even though it may not have been sufficient from the viewpoint of those left behind.

Those who remain often grapple with guilt. There's a feeling that you should have or could have prevented that final, devastating act. That you should have been more attentive. And maybe there's also a sense of feeling abandoned and betrayed.

However, peace can be found on both sides if we consider suicide not as

an end but as a transition. If we approach the act of suicide with the utmost empathy, if we forgive what needs to be forgiven, both sides can find liberation.

12 – NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES AND HEALING

"Miracles are not contrary to nature, but only contrary to what we know about nature."
Saint Augustine, Latin Theologian and Philosopher

Some are fortunate to be born twice.

There are numerous people who have consciously experienced their own death and then returned to life. This phenomenon is known as a near-death experience (NDE).

The circumstances surrounding the moment of passing may vary widely: a car crash, a terminal illness, or a failed surgery, to name just a few scenarios. However, the accounts of what happened immediately after clinical death coincide in many cases. Those affected often describe a journey through a tunnel. At the end of it, there appears to be a light that exerts a strong attraction. Most of those who return also recall encounters with deceased relatives and friends.

For centuries, scientists have pondered the true nature of these experiences. Often, they attempt to debunk the reports of NDEs provided by those who claim to have had them.

They put forth theories suggesting that under extreme stress or at the brink of death, the brain produces a flurry of images that are merely an illusion. From a purely scientific standpoint, near-death experiences are seen as implausible.

The prevailing belief is that with clinical death, our ability to experience and remember also ceases. Death, as it is commonly understood, is a one-way journey.

Those who have personally lived through a near-death experience know their truth and are not disconcerted even by scientists. They know firsthand

that life goes on even after physical death.

And their fear of dying vanishes and is replaced by a new, liberating outlook on life.

The International Association for Near-Death Studies has meticulously documented and analyzed hundreds of near-death experiences. The findings: Most NDEs are characterized as peaceful and loving, although some are also described as terrifying.

Even though the descriptions of individual components in the transition process are mostly alike, their interpretation and emotional impacts can differ significantly.

The classic components of a near-death experience include:

1. Leaving the physical body. The dying individual often sees their own body left behind, as well as the surroundings, and can later describe this scene in detail.
2. Travelling through a tunnel or darkness, accompanied by wind-like sounds.
3. The ascension into an extremely bright light at the end of the tunnel. This and the following steps are often described as a kind of immersion in unconditional love. The individuals often recognize people, animals, plants, and sometimes even villages or towns.
4. Being greeted by friendly voices, people, or entities, which could be known individuals, strangers, or even religious figures. Information can be shared, and messages can be conveyed.
5. Reviewing the individual's life on earth from birth until death.
6. A warped perception of time and space, with the understanding that worldly dimensions hold no relevance in the non-physical sphere.
7. Expressing disappointment when their physical body survives, often accompanied by a resistance to returning to the density or constraints of the physical body.

Using these criteria, Scott Taylor, a former director of the Monroe Institute, has developed a series of specialized meditations. In these, elements of a classical NDE can be explored without the shock or trauma of spontaneous near-death experiences.

For a number of years, Scott has been teaching a course with the title *Near-Death Experience Intensive* based on his personal experience.

This workshop also utilizes Hemi-Sync frequencies to access specific areas in the non-physical. Unlike classic Monroe programs, Scott refrains from addressing specific Focus levels.

Therefore, people who are not familiar with the Monroe Method and have no previous knowledge can also participate in the program.

For many years, I strictly adhered to the Focus level scale, which assisted my navigation within and between various non-physical environments to the extent that I always knew precisely where I was.

Participating in Scott's program gave me an unexpected insight. I realized that although the scale of Focus levels can provide a helpful map, it also defines the boundaries of the individual levels of consciousness that do not inherently exist.

Both approaches have their pros and cons, and they offer invaluable experiences and fantastic opportunities for exploring our greater existence.

The journeys in *Lifeline* and *Exploration 27* are geographically oriented, specifically targeting areas like in-between levels or the Park. The *Near-Death Experience Intensive* program focuses on the comprehensive exploration and observation of individual elements within the entire spectrum of otherworldly phenomena, regardless of the specific level on which they manifest.

The following excerpt from my Monroe diary describes my first journey through the tunnel and into the light:

I've barely stretched out my legs when I feel my body begin to sink into the familiar state of deep relaxation. I feel a slight chill. My arms are heavy. I can hardly pull the cover over myself, even though the Hemi-Sync signals haven't even started yet. I perceive Scott's voice over the headphones, but I'm already so far gone that I don't even try to follow his instructions.

Instead, I ask my spirit team to assist and guide me: I must find the tunnel!

I can no longer feel my body, and I distinctly sense my awareness expanding.

A dark room opens up in front of me. It has no walls, doors, or windows. A familiar density envelops me like a cloak. I feel safe and, at the same time, free from all earthly limitations.

I am! Without a sense of time and without a destination. Without thoughts

and without noise. Eternity.

I resist Scott's voice as it reaches me from an infinite distance.

“Ask your spirit guides to lead you through the tunnel. Try to gather as many impressions as possible and remember them.”

Oh, yes… I recall my intention and ask my team to show me the tunnel. It remains dark, but the energy structure surrounding me changes within seconds.

The previously seemingly endless space suddenly takes form. Instead of silence, I now feel a sort of vibration around me accompanied by a sweet sound. The tunnel walls are embedded with stones resembling colorful crystals. They radiate brightly without lighting up the darkness.

Before I can further explore this phenomenon, I notice countless lights zipping by on my right and left at an astonishing speed. They move so quickly that I can't even discern their size or shape.

“Could these be other souls?”

Before I can even fully form the question in my mind, I intuitively know the answer: Yes!

Curious, I decide to follow the lights.

Merely intending to do so provides enough momentum. Before I know it, I'm one of the many lights, all moving in the same direction.

I'm not sure how long I've been traveling when suddenly, an intensely bright light appears before me. A split second later, I'm immersed in it.

“I’ve arrived!” is my first thought. “Home at last!” is my second.

I’m overwhelmed by the energetic quality of the light. Rational thought is impossible. This light cannot be compared to electric light or sunlight. Not only is it brighter, but it’s also filled with pure, unconditional love.

I have no desire to journey further and gather more impressions. I just want to be here, where I am right now. Letting the light flow through me, recharging, feeling safe and secure.

Scott's voice abruptly pulls me out of my bliss. He asks me to return to waking consciousness. I reluctantly comply after expressing my gratitude to my spirit team for this extraordinary experience.

After the meditation, I found it particularly difficult to reconnect with my earthly body and the density of physical reality. Once again, I became aware of how limited and immobile we are in this environment.

I am grateful for the experience and the newfound knowledge and, of course, for knowing that I can revisit this nurturing light whenever I wish.

Most people who have had a near-death experience subsequently report significant shifts in their worldview and their perception of existence.

There are also many accounts from people who experienced spontaneous healing coinciding with their NDE.

Doctors had all but given up on Anita Moorjani in 2006. Her book, *Dying to Be Me,* chronicles how her cancer unexpectedly went into remission following a near-death experience.

Stories like Anita Moorjani's suggest that unimaginable opportunities present themselves in non-physical realms.

Through targeted meditations, in which specific aspects of near-death experiences are consciously experienced, anyone can access this healing potential in the afterlife for themselves.

One of my workshop participants did exactly that and experienced something remarkable.

I first met Larissa in the summer of 2015 at my *Introduction to OBEs* workshop in Hamburg. A little less than a year later, we met again at my *Exploring the Afterlife* program.

Just a few months prior, Larissa had been diagnosed with a highly aggressive type of advanced-stage breast cancer. She was already undergoing chemotherapy when the workshop began.

At the time, I was unaware of her condition. As she later told me, her prognosis was not very promising.

Even though we ventured on a few journeys to otherworldly environments over the course of the weekend, I only briefly mentioned the healing center in Focus 27.

It wasn't until January 2018, when Larissa registered for another workshop that she told me about her serious illness.

Inspired by my teachings and the experiences she'd had during the workshop two years earlier, Larissa visited the healing center in Focus 27 on her own initiative, hoping to find support for her difficult situation.

Larissa shared how she was warmly received at each of her visits over the following months and received therapeutic treatments.

"After a while, everyone there knew me well and was aware of my

problem. Everything worked seamlessly. I walked through several energy portals to cleanse my body. There was also a kind of sieve they had me pass through. When I did, I could feel how ‘the bad stuff’ was left on that sieve.”

Larissa admitted that it was difficult to articulate what she had experienced because nothing like it exists in the physical world.

“But it was very real. And my cancer, including the metastases, receded until no more cancer cells were detected. Complete remission.”

Larissa became a medical miracle.

“The doctors think I've been incredibly lucky because something like this very rarely happens. But I know what helped me, and I continue to visit the healing center in Focus 27 for follow-up care.”

Larissa’s experience is encouraging and instills hope in all of us. As invaluable as our conventional treatment options are, it is worthwhile considering complementary and alternative therapies.

In a sense, this story also confirms my own perceptions. Independently and long before Larissa told me about her situation, I witnessed a treatment in Focus 27 that aligns with her description of the purifying sieve.

I generally find the energy field of Focus 27 to be very healing and, as a result, enjoy visiting the Park for my own rejuvenation.

Up until April 2016, when I participated in Scott Taylor’s *Near-Death Experience Intensive* program, I hadn't given much thought to the topic of healing work. Perhaps it was because I had not experienced any significant health issues up until then, or maybe because healing appeared to me as a highly complex topic. I was more inclined to use my free time exploring other non-physical phenomena.

However, it was during Scott's workshop that the importance of healing was highlighted to me from the non-physical realm during a meditation. This experience shifted my perspective and emphasized the necessity of incorporating healing not only into my exploration of non-physical phenomena but also into my work.

I am listening to Scott Taylor’s pleasantly sonorous voice. Following the guided relaxation, I feel myself gradually detaching from my physical body. Instead of choosing a direction, I am spending a few minutes floating in weightlessness.

I would love to remain in this state for hours, but Scott has other plans.

He carefully guides me to the entrance of the tunnel, with a distant light visible at its end.

Since my visual perception is somewhat unstable, I try to feel my surroundings rather than reaching for images at this point.

"What would flying through the tunnel feel like?" I wonder.

Barely have I formulated the question in my mind when I am suddenly swept away by a vortex, losing all sense of orientation.

When the whirlwind finally subsides, I find myself in a stunningly beautiful rose garden bathed in light. Not far from where I stand, I notice a white building, which immediately reminds me of the Sanssouci Palace in Potsdam, Germany.

I allow the vivid colors and strong scent of the roses to envelop my senses until I can no longer resist the pull of the white building.

As I approach, two glass-paned French doors swing open, revealing a spacious and luminous room that instantly reminds me of a yoga studio.

Inside, I see approximately 10 to 12 bald men sitting in a semi-circle on round meditation cushions. They are all attired in white shirts and pants. Upon closer inspection, I notice the presence of a female figure among them, distinguished by her striking black hair that extends to at least shoulder length.

Pondering where I might have landed, a voice in my head responds, "You are in the Park."

I can then clearly sense the slightly electrifying energy of Focus 27.

The entities continue to sit silently, prompting me to wonder about their identity.

"We are the Council," they telepathically reply.

I know that I'm not dreaming or fantasizing. The encounter feels as real as any physical one, if not more so.

Before I can ask more questions, I receive instructions from the "Council." They appear to communicate collectively rather than individually, giving me very detailed directions. They request that I create a new workshop focused on healing, even suggesting specific Hemi-Sync recordings to incorporate.

The Council also indicates which Focus levels I should select for the healing work. Some of the recordings I'll have to design myself, as they don't yet exist in the required form.

This catches me off guard.

"But I've no idea how to do that," I mentally interject and feel a strong resistance towards the assigned task. "I'm really not interested in the subject, and besides, I'm not a healer."

The entities seem unimpressed by my defiance and convey a sense of urgency to me. They seem friendly and loving but very determined.

Then the clarity of my perception begins to fade, and I quickly return to waking consciousness, aided by my ego trying to deny the encounter I have just experienced.

Rarely are my experiences as real and of such visual quality as this one, not to mention the exquisite clarity of our communication, leaving no room for doubt or interpretation.

I wasn't even familiar with the Hemi-Sync recordings the Council had named. But I made a note of their titles because I sensed that the assignment was important, even if my ego still maintained that it didn't fit in with my life plan.

Back in Los Angeles, I immersed myself again in my familiar daily routine. The instructions given by the Council seemed less urgent with each passing day, and I began to suppress the memory of our encounter.

A few months after my return from Virginia, I suddenly felt a stabbing pain in my right shoulder, which worsened from week to week.

On December 8, 2016, I rolled out my yoga mat for the last time. After that, stretching was no longer possible because my shoulder joint had become so immobile.

By mid-January the following year, I saw a doctor and had X-rays as well as a CAT scan. The diagnosis: Frozen Shoulder Syndrome. An inflamed shoulder joint capsule caused stiffness in the joint.

My orthopedist recommended physiotherapy, but my condition only worsened. Extremely frustrated, I quit physio after a few sessions.

Deep inside, I had a hunch about why the energy flow in my body had stagnated. But my ego resisted for weeks to let go and allow the path to healing.

Eventually, I realized that I needed to change my mindset if I wanted to recover.

In the spring, I cautiously began designing the new workshop, setting a

firm date for the premiere in Switzerland in July.

With no more excuses, I immersed myself fully in the work, noticing along the way that the inflammation in my shoulder began to recede. The pain lessened, and I felt progressively better, despite the joint's remaining stiffness.

My insecurities and recurring doubts during the workshop preparation led me to question my knowledge about healing and my qualifications to run such a program.

But my authentic intention paved the way, and I learned to trust my inner voice and grow into the role.

The workshop began to take shape, and simultaneously, my shoulder began to show signs of mobility.

Two days before I was due to fly out from Los Angeles, I was invited to a trance healing presentation. During the treatment with a medium, I could clearly perceive powerful energy flowing through my upper body. The result was astonishing: Immediately after the session, my shoulder moved in a range that I hadn't experienced in almost a year.

Thanks to this direct and consciousness-expanding experience, I could now approach my workshop calmly and with positive anticipation.

Nancy “Scooter” McMoneagle, Robert Monroe’s stepdaughter and former director of the Institute, aptly defined the term “healing” in words that resonate with me on a deep level:

“The process of invoking and establishing a whole and balanced state of being that is in perfect alignment with our highest purpose and in the greatest interest of all.”

Thus, healing doesn't merely involve freedom from physical and psychological symptoms but also promotes the holistic welfare of individuals, their environments, and their communities.

By now, I’ve held the workshop many times and have come to understand why I was so urgently approached by those non-physical entities. It was time to view Out-of-Body Experiences not just as fun excursions into non-physical realms, but to recognize their benefits and untapped potential as well.

My team was eager to point out a new way of energy work, which serves self-realization and, thus, the well-being of our total self. If we learn to

perceive ourselves as multidimensional beings, we can not only support the healing of our physical body but also heal our non-physical aspects.

The non-physical resources available to enhance our lives are diverse, potent, and straightforward to utilize.

For many people, the idea of out-of-body experiences is associated with the hope for great adventures. These adventures certainly await each one of us. However, we must also be aware that this type of self-exploration comes with significant responsibility.

Undeniably, leaving our physical bodies is exciting, but what we bring back from these journeys is even more critical—for our benefit and the benefit of all.

13 – THE SEVEN KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL OBE

“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”
Thomas Alva Edison, Inventor and Entrepreneur

One of the most common questions I receive is, “Why do some people have incredibly vivid experiences during their OBE-exercises while mine are unspectacular or vague?”

As a trainer and workshop facilitator, I've helped several thousand individuals explore their consciousness over the past twelve years, whether through practicing Out-of-Body Experiences (OBEs), manifesting optimal life conditions, or communicating with non-physical entities.

For years I, too, looked with envy at those who returned from their exploratory journeys with impressive and exciting experiences while I often felt like I was staring at a blank canvas during my exercises. I didn't float out of my body, nor could I report meeting impressive entities from other dimensions.

It wasn't until I adjusted my expectations and changed my perspective that my experiences began to gain vividness.

I learned to gather verifiable information, integrate it into my physical existence, and subsequently improve my quality of life.

To shorten your own path to successful OBEs, I would like to give you some helpful tips and instructions. I believe there are seven aspects that you should internalize if you want to achieve high-quality experiences:

1. Setting the right intention

If you want to undertake journeys into the non-physical, you must be clear about why and with what purpose you embark on these travels. It is important to formulate a clear and positive intention beforehand. It should be

based on an authentic desire to explore one's own existence.

It is helpful to formulate this intention carefully in words, ideally handwritten on a sheet of paper. These sentences can then be spoken as affirmations at the beginning of meditations or exercises.

The wording can be modified, refined, or adapted anytime as you progress in your development.

Over time, you will develop a feeling that tells you if your intention is genuinely authentic or driven by ego. A clear, true intention creates a kind of energetic map that guides you to your desired result.

The more detailed and emotionally invested the intention, the more it facilitates the process. It is of utmost importance that you resonate with your chosen words.

Robert Monroe developed the Gateway Affirmation as a declaration of intent to firmly anchor his objective in his consciousness. It can be divided into three sections and can serve as a template for creating your own affirmation.

“I am more than my physical body.”

The first and at the same time most important point of the affirmation is a simple yet powerful observation. It is the prerequisite for any experiences in the non-physical.

If you doubt that you are more than just a physical body, you are on shaky ground and have no solid basis for your explorations.

Some people may have hidden doubts. It is advisable to let the above words sink in during a quiet moment or a short meditation. Are your body and mind in resonance with them? Do these words bring you inner peace, or do they prompt questions?

“Because I am more than physical matter, I can perceive that which is greater than the physical world. Therefore, I deeply desire: to expand, to experience, to know, to understand, to control, to use such greater energies and energy systems as may be beneficial and constructive to me and to those who follow me.”

In this second section of the Gateway Affirmation, Monroe first describes his desire using very precise words. At the same time, he defines the goal and purpose of fulfilling this wish in great detail. Importantly, Monroe clearly

expresses that the experiences he seeks are beneficial not only for himself but also for those with whom he feels connected—both physically and non-physically.

A simplified version of this last part could be “for everyone's highest good.”

You are free to articulate specific desires in an affirmation. For instance, if you have a deep, authentic desire for an Out-of-Body Experience, you could phrase it like this:

“I strongly feel that an Out-of-Body Experience would benefit my personal development, and I trust that I will succeed easily and for everyone's highest good.”

“Also, I deeply desire the help and cooperation, the assistance, the understanding of those individuals whose wisdom, development and experience are equal or greater than my own.”

Monroe maintained a close relationship with his non-physical helpers. They have always played a vital role in the context of his work.

By consciously asking for the support of individuals whose experience was equal to his own or even greater, he created beneficial conditions for his personal growth.

From personal experience, I know how important this form of support is in non-physical environments. In the out-of-body state, away from familiar reality, we move in environments that are not easy to navigate without appropriate experience.

Requesting the help of your spiritual guides is thus a crucial part of any affirmation.

When crafting affirmations, it's vital to focus on positive aspects and avoid negative wording.

Here is an example of how not to word an affirmation:

“I am not afraid of the dark and will not meet any evil spirits.”

This negative framing can stimulate the very emotions and experiences you wish to avoid.

Instead, consider using positive phrasing like, “I always move in the light, surrounded by individuals who lovingly and supportively stand by my side.”

Finally, every affirmation should conclude with an expression of

gratitude. More important than the actual words is the energy behind them. Aim to generate a genuine feeling of thankfulness.

Much like love, gratitude carries a high-energy vibration frequency that can serve as a bridge to the non-physical.

2. Activating energy and directing it in a controlled manner

Energy and consciousness are closely interconnected.

As multidimensional and intelligent beings, it is important for us to optimize and nurture all aspects of the consciousness system. The inner energy is referred to as Chi, Prana, life force, or bioenergy, depending on the philosophical approach, and it manifests in our emotions, various mental states, and our relationships, among other aspects.

Directing this energy purposefully can enhance our vibrational frequency, setting excellent conditions for conscious Out-of-Body Experiences, physical health, and creating optimal living conditions.

A good approach is to learn more about the chakras, the meridians, and the human energy field (the aura). There are various techniques that promote the best possible use of our personal energy field. These also include working with the Resonant Energy Balloon (REBAL) developed by Robert Monroe.

3. Recognizing and eliminating fears

Fear, whether conscious or unconscious, can hinder your intentions. Confronting and dissolving these fears is, therefore, essential.

Unconscious fears can be particularly obstructive.

Persistent failure to achieve certain goals might indicate that suppressed fears are at fault.

There are many reasons why certain emotions are buried deep within the psyche. For example, they may be considered weaknesses, and one might try to maintain the self-image of a strong personality. They could also be associated with painful experiences that have simply been repressed or suppressed.

It requires courage and absolute self-honesty to bring these suppressed emotions to light, but the endeavor is worthwhile.

By overcoming our fears, we unlock our heart's energy, which has tremendous power and is in perfect resonance with our Higher Self.

4. Harnessing the power of imagination

I like to think of imagination as a bridge between the worlds. Imagination helps to move energy and direct it in a certain direction. Like top athletes who visualize their goals, picturing your desired experience in detail can prepare you for attaining it.

Before an exercise, for instance, I picture my energy body detaching from my physical body and moving in a predetermined direction. Or I might visualize a specific encounter with an individual in Focus 27.

5. Inviting perceptions actively

Whenever I don't receive distinct impressions during a meditation or exercise, I mentally ask myself simple questions to activate my non-physical senses.

"What if…?" or "How would it feel if…?" are the two I use most frequently.

For example, if I'm trying to establish conscious contact with a non-physical helper, I mentally say:

"How would it feel if a spirit guide stood right beside me?" and "What if I could feel his hand on my shoulder?"

These simple kinds of questions always work exceptionally well for me and open my perceptive channels.

It is also worthwhile to experiment with commands such as "Perception now!" or "Clarity now!" Don't limit your creativity, and feel free to develop your own questions and commands.

6. Choosing the right time and place

Many people believe that the bed is the best place to have Out-of-Body Experiences. Even though most spontaneous OBEs tend to happen while we're sleeping, the bed isn't always the ideal location for practice. Our bodies and minds associate the bed with sleep, which can make staying awake challenging.

Similarly, the living room couch might not be the best option for everyone. Those accustomed to napping on the couch in the afternoon might find it difficult to stay awake there as well.

I like to use a yoga mat or a garden lounger for practice. I need to lie comfortably, but not too comfortably, to give my body-mind system a clear signal.

For most people, the early morning hours are best suited for practice before they actively engage the mind in daily activities. Those who work shift schedules need to adjust accordingly and practice when they are well-rested.

7. Meditating regularly

Daily meditation, akin to exercising a muscle, sharpens the mind, paving the way to enhanced cognitive abilities.

It is important to develop certain self-discipline and meditate every day, if possible. It's not the length but the quality of the meditation that matters.

I aim to meditate for at least 20 minutes before breakfast every morning. Realistically, I manage to do it five days a week. Whenever I use Hemi-Sync recordings to facilitate longer sessions, I schedule correspondingly more time.

Ideally, you should familiarize yourself with the different states of consciousness and practice achieving them with and without the support of Hemi-Sync. The Monroe Method provides fantastic tools for this.

14 – HEMI-SYNC AND THE FOCUS LEVELS

European scientists began investigating binaural beats during the second half of the 19th century. However, Robert Monroe is recognized as the pioneer who conducted comprehensive research into specific sound frequencies and their impacts on the human brain.

A successful businessman and radio program director at the time, Monroe experienced several spontaneous Out-of-Body Experiences in the late 1950s.

In search of answers no one could provide, he established a laboratory on his farm in rural Virginia. There, he collaborated with physicists, psychologists, and other scientists to study the phenomenon of OBEs. Curious neighbors and visitors volunteered as subjects for Monroe's experiments.

Monroe had found a new mission in life and did not only invest his heart and soul but also his private assets. In 1972, his passion led to the establishment of the Monroe Institute and the development of a unique audio technology: Hemi-Sync, which allows both hemispheres of the human brain to work synchronously.

Dr. Lester Fehmi of the Princeton Biofeedback Research Institute, a leading scientist in the field, describes the impact of what is known as brainwave synchrony:

“Synchrony represents the maximum efficiency of information transport through the whole brain.”

It is linked to, among other things, vivid imagery, improved memory access, creative insights, and integrative experiences.

It’s evident that a highly integrated brain, a brain in which both hemispheres are functioning in symmetry, synchrony, harmony, and unity, is a key to peak states and peak human performance.

Hemi-Sync allows the user to embrace and safely navigate specific states of consciousness deliberately. Monroe called these states Focus levels. To

simplify matters, he used numbers to differentiate between the individual levels. The following is an outline of the Focus level spectrum relevant to this book:

F1: Normal waking consciousness. Completely in phase with physical matter reality. Also referred to as C1 Consciousness.

F10: The mind is wide awake; the body is deeply at rest or asleep. A very stable state of deep relaxation.

F12: The state of expanded awareness, no longer limited to perception via the physical senses.

F15: Defined as “state of no time.” Perception expands into areas where our linear time structure loses significance. Sometimes referred to as “the void.”

F21: The threshold between physical reality and the environments outside time and space. Also referred to as “the bridge.”

F22: Level of consciousness of those who are still connected to their physical body but are unconscious, comatose, severely narcotized or suffering from delirium or dementia.

F23: The level of consciousness of individuals who are, in most cases, temporarily unable to detach themselves from the Earth’s energies after their physical death due to shock, trauma, or the denial of their demise. Focus 23 is viewed as a kind of transition level.

F24: The first level of the belief systems territories. Here reside those who still follow specific doctrines after their physical death. This area is primarily populated by primitive, religious communities.

F25: The second level of the belief systems territories. This area is a manifestation of larger organized religious communities of more recent physical human history. Clearly separated from each other, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Judaic, Islamic, and other belief systems are represented here, including their various offshoots and sects.

F26: The third level of the belief systems territories. Areas that contain structures and knowledge of various, highly individual religions, as well as

other beliefs based on direct experience of the self. Unlike F24 and F25, these are extremely small groups of individuals that very precisely define themselves through their beliefs.

F27: The general reception and transfer station to recuperate from traumas of the last physical existence and reorientation. Termed the “Park” by Robert Monroe. This is a versatile, constantly adjusting landscape with various facilities.

*

There is no plausible reason why Monroe selected the term Focus levels. Their order is not hierarchical. The increasing numbers are simply intended to differentiate between individual levels of consciousness. Just because a level has a higher number doesn’t mean that it is better, more interesting, or more desirable than a level with a lower number.

I prefer to think of the individual levels as akin to different stations on my car radio. These can range from pop to classical music to news broadcasts. Depending on my personal preference and interest, I can switch stations at will. Each Focus level has its unique characteristics. However, every individual perceives these different levels in a unique way based on their personal experiences, their personal development, and their cultural identity.

EPILOGUE

On the previous pages, I have shared my personal experiences, presented possibilities, and hopefully inspired some to embark on their own quest for answers to life's big questions.

In certain cases, I've drawn tentative conclusions based on the principles of the non-physical realms and entities I've encountered and interacted with.

At this point, I would like to stress once more that this book is not intended to explain human existence or to impose a worldview derived from personal experiences onto my readers.

My goal is to inspire as many people as possible to go out and discover their own truths.

Every society has prevailing belief systems that its members naturally absorb or adapt. Some groups even coerce their members into accepting a rigidly defined worldview, suppressing the desire for self-exploration.

In the Western world, we enjoy the substantial privilege of pursuing our own paths and freely deciding what and whom we believe.

At the onset of his research into Out-of-Body Experiences, Bob Monroe made the radical decision to discard all knowledge and doctrines he'd amassed up until that point in his life. He questioned everything he'd ever learned, enabling groundbreaking insights.

When Monroe made his work available to others, his greatest wish was to uphold the principle of an individual's utmost autonomy over their own truth. He wanted to inspire people not just to believe but to gain knowledge through direct personal experiences.

This approach has also become the sole method for me to discover my truth.

Over thousands of years, humanity has developed diverse methods to expand consciousness and facilitate access to non-physical realities—from

traditional meditation and hypnosis to the use of plant medicine or drugs.

Not every approach is suitable for everyone. It's crucial to understand the individual methods, opportunities, and limitations.

Traditional meditation demands patience and determination. Hypnosis provides the opportunity for controlled experiences but needs guidance from a hypnotherapist. In this approach, the nature of the questions asked on the part of the therapist can greatly influence the personal experience.

Drug use can cause an abrupt shift in consciousness and unlock vast potentialities. However, the downside is that experiences usually occur completely uncontrolled. Neither can the duration be predicted, which can lead to unforeseen consequences.

Personally, working with binaural beats strikes a happy medium. I receive strong stimulation via the sound frequencies, yet I maintain full control over the intensity and duration of my experience.

Essentially, each of us can peer behind the curtain of physical reality. We just need to create the time and space to further develop this ability without comparing our individual progress to that of others.

Every stage of development holds value and presents untapped potential. Everyone is perfect just as they are.

* * *

You can find more information about my work at

www.olivertappe.com

GLOSSARY

Arthur Findlay College — College of spiritualism and psychic sciences in Stansted Hall, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex, England. www.arthurfindlaycollege.org

BodyTalk System™ — Holistic body and soul therapy. www.bodytalksystem.com

CHEC Unit — Abbreviation for Controlled Holistic Environmental Chamber. A wooden enclosure designed by Robert Monroe, furnished with a mattress and a heavy curtain. It contains headphones and speakers, which are used during the meditations. The CHEC Unit also serves as a bed.

Exploration 27 — A Monroe Institute five-day program building on the *Lifeline* program to further explore the "Park" and other afterlife phenomena.

Focus-Level — Robert Monroe named various states of consciousness "Focus levels" and assigned them numbers for the sake of simplicity to help distinguish one from another.

Fox Den — One of several common areas at the Monroe Institute's Nancy Penn Center.

Gateway Voyage — A Monroe Institute five-day program for beginners to become acquainted with and experience Focus levels 10 to 21.

Guidelines — A Monroe Institute five-day program to promote intuitive perception and meet spirit guides.

Heartline — A Monroe Institute five-day program with an emphasis on self-love, trust, and emotional healing.

International Association for Near-Death Studies — Foundation for the investigation of near-death experiences.
https://iands.org

Lifeline — A Monroe Institute five-day program to become acquainted with and experience Focus levels 22 to 27.

Monroe Institute — World's leading institution for the study of human consciousness in Faber, Virginia, founded by Robert Monroe in the early seventies.
www.monroeinstitute.org

Nancy Penn Center — The Monroe Institute's main building where the seminar participants are housed. The building was named after Nancy Penn, Robert Monroe's wife.

Phasing – Explains the process of expanding and refocusing human consciousness.

Point Consciousness – The state of complete inner stillness where the mind no longer focuses on physical reality and the brain doesn't process any information.

PREP-Session – One-on-one session in a soundproof booth with a waterbed at the Monroe Institute's lab, guided by a technician.

Quick Switch-Technique — see *Phasing*.

Remote Viewing — the practice of seeking impressions about a distant or unseen subject or object, purportedly sensing with the mind.
Robert's Mountain Retreat — The Monroe family's former private residence, which was converted into a retreat center after Robert's death.

Stargate Project — A secret U.S. Army unit established in 1978 at Fort Meade, Maryland, by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to investigate the potential for psychic phenomena in military and domestic intelligence applications.

Trance-Mediumship – A special aspect of mediumship where a medium may channel an entity from the spirit world.

White Carpet Room – Assembly room at the Nancy Penn Center of the

Monroe Institute, furnished with a white carpet.

EXPERTS

Dr. Alexander, Eben — Neurosurgeon, author of the bestseller *Proof of Heaven* and *Living in a Mindful Universe*.
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Buhlman, William — Author, trainer and expert in Out-of-Body Experiences.
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Campbell, Thomas — Physicist, consciousness researcher and author of the *MY Big TOE* trilogy.
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Cottrell, Lynn — Medium, tutor, spiritual artist. www.facebook.com/Lynn-Cottrell-Spirit-Art-538820936273542

Dr. Fehmi, Lester — Psychologist, executive director of the Princeton Biofeedback Centre, LLC.
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Leussink, Fleur — Psychic medium and Intuition Teacher
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Dr. Lipton, Bruce — Biologist and author of the bestseller *The Biology of Belief.*
www.brucelipton.com

Monroe, Robert — Consciousness researcher and founder of the Monroe Institute. Inventor of the Hemi-Sync® audio technology.
www.monroeinstitute.org

Monroe Sound Science — A combination of sound techniques that include

binaural beats, as well as frequency, amplitude, and phase modulation.

Dr. Veltheim, John — Originator of the *BodyTalk System*™ and author of several books on the subject.
www.bodytalksystem.com

THANK YOU!

Typically, I don't find writing to be a challenge. However, (IN)VISIBLE almost didn't come to fruition due to a chronic shortage of time and several unsuccessful attempts, leaving me with piles of unsorted material.

The pandemic unexpectedly provided the needed time slot in 2020. Unlike writing my previous books, I found the process far from easy.

Without the active support and inspiration from some wonderful individuals, I would have been hopelessly overwhelmed.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my wife, Anna-Barbara, who has offered me unwavering support from the first day of our shared life, continually encouraging me to live my truth. Thank you for your thorough first round of edits and the numerous hours you dedicated to this book. ≡

Many thanks to you, Olaf! Your constructive criticism, your attention to detail, and your expert editing skills of the original German version have enormously enhanced this book.

Thank you, Kim and Sarah, for your awesome support with the English version. I am beyond grateful.

My heartfelt gratitude goes out to my spirit team, who have done an exceptional job guiding me along the way.